

















BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dissertation  
JOHN LOCKE'S  
CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM

by

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(A.B., Dickinson College, 1936;  
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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

1943







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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Problem of this Dissertation.

The problem of this dissertation is that of expounding and criticizing John Locke's conception of freedom. There is in men's minds a misunderstanding to the effect that one's conception of the self (whether determined or free, for example, and the nature of that determination or freedom) is irrelevant to one's social view. No doubt it is irrelevant in practice; but in adequate theory, it is relevant indeed. This examination of Locke's conception of freedom is made in the light of that mistaken view; and part of the aim of this dissertation is to suggest the vital relation that does hold between one's view of man and his social theory. Since Locke's thought affords an excellent illustration of this problem, special emphasis will be placed on the relation of his conception of man to his theory of the social order. The central problem of this dissertation, then, is Locke's conception of freedom. But the problem consists of several essential parts, namely, an examination of Locke's view of the freedom of the self, as such, an examination of his theory of social freedom, as such, and the relations existing between the two; another brief consideration of this dissertation will be the influence of Locke's conception of freedom on certain areas of subsequent

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Problem of this Dissertation.

The problem of this dissertation is that of explaining and criticizing John Locke's conception of freedom. There is in man's mind a misunderstanding as to the effect that one's conception of the self (whether determined or free, for example, and the nature of that determination or free-dom) is influential to one's social view. No doubt it is influential in practice; but in abstract theory, it is irrelevant indeed. This examination of Locke's conception of freedom is made in the light of that mistaken view; and part of the aim of this dissertation is to suggest the vital relation that does hold between one's view of man and his social theory. Since Locke's thought stands as an excellent illustration of this problem, special emphasis will be placed on the relation of his conception of man to his theory of the social order. The central problem of this dissertation, then, is Locke's conception of freedom. But the problem consists of several essential parts, namely, an examination of Locke's view of the freedom of the self as such, an examination of his theory of social freedom, as such, and the relations existing between the two notions and our consideration of this dissertation will be the influence of Locke's conception of freedom on certain ideas of subsequent



thought and history, though this is but incidental to the central problem of the paper.

## B. Definition of Terms.

The meaning of the terms used in this dissertation will become clear as the discussion proceeds; however, two terms which are fundamental to the whole dissertation will be defined in advance. One of these is the term, freedom, and the other is the related term, democracy.

Here freedom is used in two clearly differing senses. In one sense, it pertains to the nature of the self's activity, particularly in relation to its experience of willing. In the other sense, it is related to political and social organization. In Chapter II, it is used essentially in the first sense; in Chapter III, it is used largely in the second.

In the third chapter, especially, in connection with the discussion of social freedom, the term democracy is used. Throughout, that term is taken to mean not the democracy of popular assembly, which Plato ardently condemned and which is certainly impracticable for any community of large membership, but, rather, representative government in which sovereignty resides in the people who elect their leaders by majority rule to bring the people's will to expression in the laws which the leaders are thus empowered to legislate.

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which sovereignty resides in the people who elect their  
leaders by majority vote to bring the people's will to ex-  
pression in the laws which the leaders are thus empowered  
to enforce.



## C. The Procedure for Gathering Data and the Structure of the Dissertation.

### 1. The procedure for gathering data.

The procedure for gathering data for this study involved the examination of numerous bibliographical sources. They included Rand's Bibliography of Philosophy, Psychology, and Cognate Subjects; encyclopaedias and dictionaries such as Hastings's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Baldwin's Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology, and The Encyclopaedia Britannica; histories of philosophy by Windelband and Ueberweg; library files, particularly those of the Boston Public Library and the Harry Elkins Widener Library of Harvard in Cambridge; suggestions from varied readings too numerous to mention, and other suggestions gleaned from conversations.

### 2. The structure of this dissertation.

The remainder of this brief introductory chapter will include a short synopsis of Locke's life and a general survey of his writings and of the literature related to the problem of this dissertation. The second chapter will deal with Locke's conception of the freedom of the self and will fall into three major parts: a preliminary discussion of the general problem of the self's freedom, an exposition and criticism of Locke's view and a suggestion as to the influence of his view on the philosophic writings on that subject in his own day and after. The third chapter will consider

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Locke's conception of social freedom. It will begin by relating his social theory to his conception of man and will continue with a detailed exposition and evaluation of the major theses of his view of social freedom; it will close with a brief exposition of the influence of this aspect of Locke's thought on the French and American revolutions. This chapter will be followed by a bibliography which, in turn, will be followed by an abstract of the most important conclusions of this dissertation.

#### 1 D. Synopsis of Locke's Life.

John Locke was born at Pensford, near Wrington, England, on August 29, 1632. Little is known of his childhood; but from 1646 to 1652 he attended Westminster School. From 1652 to 1656 he attended Christ Church, Oxford, where he was critical of the scholastic mood of the instruction received. Immediately, after graduation, however, he took his master's degree and began teaching at Oxford.

In 1665 he became the secretary of Sir Walter Vane and, with him, went to the Continent, returning to England in 1666. Shortly thereafter, he entered the secretarial service of Lord Ashley and later, having studied science and medicine, became a member of the Royal Academy. In a discussion among his friends, in 1770, suggestions were made which prompted him to undertake his writing of the monumental

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1. Bourne, L.J.L, especially II, 565-568.

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# I

## B. Synopsis of Locke's Life.

John Locke was born at Wrington, near Bristol, England, on August 29, 1632. Little is known of his childhood; but from 1646 to 1652 he attended Westminster School. From 1652 to 1658 he attended Christ Church, Oxford, where he was a student of the scholastic mood of the institution. Immediately after graduation, however, he took his master's degree and began teaching at Oxford. In 1663 he became the secretary of Sir Walter Vane and with him went to the Continent, returning to England in 1668. Shortly thereafter, he entered the secretarial service of Lord Ashley and later, having studied medicine and become a member of the Royal Society. In a discussion among his friends in 1670, suggestions were made which prompted him to undertake his writing of the monumental



Essay. From 1675 to 1679 he lived on the Continent; upon returning, he assisted Shaftsbury in political work. After Shaftsbury's death in 1683 (having left his service the year before), Locke settled in Holland where he developed his friendship with Limborch. In 1689, the Glorious Revolution over, Locke returned to England, and shortly thereafter in 1690, published his significant works, the Essay, the Two Treatises on Government, and A Second Letter Concerning Toleration, (the first and most important having been published in 1885 or 1889).

In 1691, Locke settled at Oates and through his remaining years enjoyed the privileges of reflection and friendship, the latter with such persons as Limborch, Clarke, Tillotson, William and Thomas Molyneux, Betty Clarke, and Anthony Collins. During these last years, in spite of failing health, Locke maintained an active interest in political and commercial affairs and gave much time to theological and biblical studies. He even wrote with care about, and planned for, the building of a chaise for his old-age evening rides in the country.

Deeply sincere, generous and humble, affectionate in friendship to the end, the songs of the Psalms singing in his mind, Locke died on October 28, 1704. Of him it was aptly said:

"He was always, in the greatest and in the smallest affairs of human life, as well as in speculative opinions, disposed to follow reason, whosoever

From 1875 to 1878 he lived on the Continent; upon returning, he resumed Shaftsbury in political work. After Shaftsbury's death in 1883 (having left his services the year before), Locke settled in Holland where he developed his friendship with Isherod. In 1888, the Glasgow Revolution over, Locke returned to England, and shortly thereafter in 1890, published his significant work, the Essay, the Two Treatises on Government, and A Second Letter Concerning Toleration. (The first and most important having been published in 1886 or 1887.)

In 1891, Locke settled at Gates and through the remaining years enjoyed the privileges of reflection and friendship, the latter with such persons as Isherod, Clarke, Tilston, Willis and Thomas Molyneux, Betty Clarke, and Anthony Giffins. During these last years, in spite of failing health, Locke maintained an active interest in political and commercial affairs and gave much time to theological and biblical studies. He even wrote with some short, and planned for, the writing of a chapter for his old-age evening paper in the country. Deeply sincere, generous and humble, affectionate in friendship to the end, the range of his faith during his life, Locke died on October 22, 1904. Of him it was aptly said:

He was always, in the greatest and in the small-  
est affairs of human life, as well as in general  
life opinions, disposed to follow reason, wherever



it were that suggested it; he being ever a faithful servant--I had almost said a slave--to Truth; never abandoning her for anything else, and following her, for her own sake, purely."<sup>2</sup>

As he partook of the last elements of the holy communion which were ever to touch his lips he, himself, had said:

"I am in perfect Charity with all men and in sincere communion with the whole church of Christ, by whatever names Christ's followers call themselves."<sup>3</sup>

There it is, the spirit that sustained him and survived the centuries; the spirit of an earnest follower of truth, who desired the well-being of all mankind, and warmed the modern world with the glowing flame of tolerance.

#### E. Survey of the Literature.

The literature pertaining to this investigation consists of two main groups, Locke's own works, and writings about his thought, the latter dividing naturally into four other groups.

##### 1. Locke's writings.

A highly satisfactory edition of Locke's works, used in this study, is the new, corrected edition, published in London by Thomas Tegg, W. Sharpe and Sons, in 1823. A. C. Fraser's edition of Locke's Essay, published at Oxford by the Clarendon Press in 1894, is valuable, too, because of its stimulating commentary on Locke's thought.

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2. Bourne, LJL, II, 540.

3. Bourne, LJL II, 557.

it were that suggested it; he being ever a latter-  
and nervous--I had almost said a slave--to think  
never abandoning her for anything else, and fol-  
lowing her, for her own sake, surely."

As he passed of the last elements of the holy communion  
which were ever to touch his lips he, himself, had said:

"I am in perfect charity with all men and in  
perfect communion with the whole church of Christ,  
by whatever names Christ's followers call them-  
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There it is, the spirit that sustained him and survived the  
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*A survey of the literature.*

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Locke's writings as a whole were quite extensive. The 1823 edition, alone, containing Locke's most important works, consists of ten heavy volumes. But an even more detailed record of Locke's writings is outlined in H. R. Fox Bourne's two volume The Life of John Locke.<sup>4</sup> The most significant of these are the following: part of "The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina" (1669-1670); Epistola de Tolerantia (1685?); An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690); Two Treatises of Government (1690); A Second Letter Concerning Toleration (1690); Some Considerations of the Consequences of the Lowering of Interest and Raising the Value of Money (1692); A Third Letter for Toleration (1692); Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1693); The Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures (1695); "Remarks upon some of Mr. Norris's Books" (1695); An Examination of Malebranche's Opinion of Seeing all Things in God (1695); A Letter to the Bishop of Worcester (Stillingfleet; 1697), Reply....(1697), Reply....(1699); Of the Conduct of the Understanding (written during and after the spring of 1697 and published after his death in 1706 by his cousin, Peter King);<sup>5</sup> "Elements of Natural Philosophy," published in A Collection of Several Pieces of Mr. John Locke, in 1720;<sup>6</sup> An Essay for the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles (1707);

4. LJL, II, 569-570.

5. Bourne, LJL, II, 443, and n. 1 and 2.

6. Bourne, LJL, II, 449, n. 2.



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and A Fourth Letter for Toleration published after his death, in 1706. In addition, Locke carried on a voluminous and illuminating correspondence. But Locke's many writings seem few in number as contrasted with the great abundance of works that have been written about him.

## 2. Works on Locke's thought.

It is probably not far from the truth to say that almost every philosopher of significance since Locke's day, and many who were not philosophers, have had occasion, somewhere in their writings, to mention Locke. The materials on Locke consulted for this study, therefore, have been selected in the light of the particular subject of freedom. Nothing has as yet been uncovered which bears such a title as the title of this dissertation; but works have been found and used which suggested some kind of relation to the problem at hand. The extent of the survey of these works is indicated in the bibliography attached to the dissertation. The present purpose, therefore, is by no means to duplicate that bibliography. It is rather to suggest and illustrate the four major types of literature about Locke's thought that have entered into this study.

a. There are, first of all, those works which are related to a consideration of the freedom of the self. Some of them deal with the problem in general; some with Locke's treatment of it in particular. Among the former are such works as Hobbes's Leviathan (1651) and On Liberty and Necessity



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(1654); Berkeley's Treatise (1710); Kant's Kritik der praktischen Vernunft (1788); Bowne's Metaphysics (1882) and Introduction to Psychological Theory (1887); James's "Dilemma of Determinism" (1884); McTaggart's Some Dogmas of Religion (1906); Palmer's The Problem of Freedom (1911); Thomson's The Springs of Human Action (1927); Hocking's The Self: Its Body and Freedom (1928); Spaulding's What Am I? (1928); Brightman's Moral Laws (1933) and "Freedom, Purpose, and Value" (1940); and Arthur Compton's The Freedom of Man (1935). Among the books which deal specifically with Locke's conception of the self are such works as Fraser's disconnected comments on Locke's Essay (1894); Rickaby's Free Will in Four English Philosophers (1906); and Hudson's Personality in Locke, Berkeley, and Hume (1911).

b. The second type of books is those which deal with Locke's social theory in particular, but include, as well, general works on social philosophy such as Borgeaud's Rise of Modern Democracy (1894; a translation of two articles published originally in French, one in 1890 and the other in 1891) and Anshen's compilation of the views of various philosophers, entitled Freedom, Its Meaning (1940). Books which give Locke particular consideration are illustrated by Stephen's History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (1876); Gooch's The History of English Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century (1898); Graham's English



(1884); Berkeley's Treatise (1710); Kant's Kritik der praktischen Vernunft (1785); Hume's Metaphysics (1888) and Introduction to Psychological Theory (1887); James's "Dilemma of Determinism" (1884); Mill's Some Doctrines of Helioion (1905); Palmer's The Problem of Freedom (1911); Thomas's The Origins of Human Action (1927); Hooking's The Self, Its Body and Freedom (1928); Spaulding's What Am I? (1928); Brightman's Moral Law (1923) and "Freedom, Purpose, and Value" (1940); and Arthur Compton's The Freedom of Man (1935). Among the books which deal specifically with Locke's conception of the self are such works as Fraser's A Disconnected comments on Locke's Essay (1905); Rickaby's Free Will in Four English Philosophers (1906); and Hudson's Personality in Locke, Berkeley, and Hume (1911).

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Political Philosophy (1899); Laski's Political Thought in England from Locke to Bentham (1920); Sorley's A History of English Philosophy (1920); and Larkin's Property in the Eighteenth Century (1930).

c. The third type of literature is literature which reveals the nature of Locke's influence on the French Revolution. This group is illustrated by the following works: De Tocqueville's On the State of Society in France (1856; excerpts from his French work, L'ancien régime et la révolution, second edition, 1856); Lecky's Democracy and Liberty (1890) and The French Revolution (1904; excerpts from his A History of England in the Eighteenth Century, 1878-1890); Lowell's The Eve of the French Revolution (1892); Texte's Jean-Jacques Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire (1895; English translation, 1899); Häffding's Jean Jacques Rousseau (the earliest reference noted is to a German edition of 1897); Aulard's Histoire politique comparée de la Révolution Française (1901); Faquet's La politique comparée de Montesquieu, Rousseau et Voltaire (1902); and Fletcher's Montesquieu and English Politics (1939). The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau are also included here.

d. The fourth division of literature about Locke contains those works which shed light on his influence on the American Revolution. Significant among these are Hazen's "The French Revolution as Seen by the Americans of the



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Eighteenth Century" (read in public meeting in 1895 and published in 1896); Brailsford's Shelley, Godwin, and their Circle (1914?); Adams's Political Ideas of the American Revolution (1922); Egerton's The Causes and Character of the American Revolution (1923); Charles Beard's An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States (1935); and writings by Madison, Hamilton, Jay, Jefferson, and Paine.

The aim and fundamental definitions of this dissertation have been set forth; the procedure for gathering data has been noted and the structure of the general outline has been mentioned; Locke's life has been reviewed; and an illustrative survey of the literature related to this study has been made. It is now, therefore, appropriate to turn specifically to Locke's thought and to examine, in the next chapter, his conception of the freedom of the self.

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## CHAPTER II

### LOCKE'S CONCEPTION OF THE FREEDOM OF THE SELF

It is the purpose of this chapter to examine John Locke's conception of power, the conception about which he clusters his views on human freedom. Because it lends much to clarity and a reader's understanding of the precise meaning of the subsequent criticism of Locke's views on this subject, a positive view of the meaning of the self's freedom will first be presented.

#### A. The Freedom of the Self.

##### 1. The nature of the problem and the thesis.

True it is that "from any theoretical point of view the question is insoluble."<sup>1</sup> One cannot, in man's present state of knowledge, come to a decisive conclusion which is grounded on a perfect argument. But the possibility of insight into the problem, even with James, is not as slight as his words suggest. One can have no absolutely certain knowledge of anything. But one can have degrees of knowledge, can attain to different degrees of coherence and adequacy in an interpretation of his total experience. So with the particular problem of freedom. One can come to no completely certain theoretical solution; but one can come to what may prove to be the most coherent conclusion attainable. It is,

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therefore, the standpoint of this chapter that freedom is not self-evidently and without difficulty the winner in the debate concerning the nature of the self; it is, rather, that, while the theory of determinism is extremely compelling and in certain respects is more readily conceivable than is freedom, in more fundamental respects, the argument for freedom is even more compelling and the reality of freedom, however difficult to define, is indispensable to personality and is the basic presupposition of meaningful experience.

In spite of Berkeley's keen observation that in many matters "we have first raised a dust and then complain we cannot see,"<sup>2</sup> certain problems can approach solution or even adequate consideration only after a dust has been raised. It is possible to see without raising a dust--though sunshine glistens most impressively when it shines down shafts of sparkling specks. Likewise, it is possible to come to quick conclusions without being troubled by perplexing problems; but the problem at hand is most illumined only when dusty questions are raised, even though, at first, they blind the eyes and serve to make confusion the more confounded. It is possible to affirm, without equivocation, the primacy of freedom and to proceed, from that assumption, to criticize all other views; but it is better to contend with the strength

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2. Berkeley, Treatise, Intro., 3.

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of determinism before one argues that freedom is real. It is, then, with awareness of the strength of determinism, that the reality of freedom is argued here. But what is the meaning of determinism and what is the preliminary definition of freedom with which this discussion starts?

## 2. Definitions.

Determinism, as used here in its broadest sense, includes every kind of theory of the self which denies that, in some way and in some degree, the self is exempt from the inexorable draft of the principle of universal, necessary causality. Put in a more positive form, determinism here is taken to mean that the total life of the self is included in and wholly explained by the principle of necessary cause and effect.<sup>3</sup> It affirms that whatsoever a self or a person does or wills or thinks is wholly determined by the past; in no sense is there ever a new beginning; there is no law of reason or of spirit which differs even slightly from the law of mechanism. One who believes in materialism as Hobbes did, one who believes in behaviorism as did Watson, one who, like Locke, in one vein at least, affirmed psychological hedonism, and those who, like Hume and Mill, expounded theories based on character as well as circumstance, are equally determinists. Whether the level of mechanism be physical or mental, whether

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Whether the level of mechanism be physical or mental, whether



it be dressed in "hard" or "soft" colors, acknowledged to be determinism or subtly called freedom--like those theories of which Bowne writes, in which "inner necessity is extended to the entire activity" and "we have nothing of freedom left but the name,"<sup>4</sup> every theory which denies that, in some sense or in some manner, however mysterious or evasive, the spirit of man is literally free, is a deterministic theory of the self.<sup>5</sup> In short, by determinism is meant any theory which affirms or implies, in its presuppositions or consequences, that man is a process, an effect, rather than a self or person.<sup>6</sup>

Now whatever, in addition, freedom is suggested subsequently to mean, it is here held to mean that the human self, in some manner and to an indefinable degree, is independent of the process of mechanistic causality, physical and mental. It means that the self is the ultimate reality which, far from being the slave, is the source of principles such, even, as that of necessary causality. It means that the self, within the limits of relevant mechanisms and the content of specific occasions of experience, may choose among possibilities and is not inevitably driven to an inescapable necessity. It does not mean mere chance, either; it means the spiritual power of a self to choose among possibilities

4. Bowne, IPT, 223; quoted by Hildrbrand, BSSF, 102.

5. Cf. Thomson, SHA, 188-189; Palmer, PF, 46-69, 185.

6. Cf. Blanshard, NT, I, 477.

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according to the person's own, freely pronounced, decree. It does not mean that it defies the principle of causality or that it is wholly indifferent to and free from mechanistic processes; it affirms, rather, that every event, every "free act has a cause as much as any other" but that "its cause is the free spirit."<sup>7</sup>

It remains, then to consider the relative adequacy of the theories of determinism and freedom, to indicate, if possible, where and how freedom finds expression in the self, and to set forth a theory of the form in which that freedom may be conceived.

### 3. The relative adequacy of determinism and freedom.

Two reasons, at least, account for the fact that the question of freedom has been a point of unceasing controversy in the history of thought. One is the haunting, though sometimes evaded, awareness of the necessity of freedom. The other, and the one to be considered now, is "the inveterate habit of looking at processes of life and mind through unrealized mechanical analogy."<sup>8</sup> That is, the assumption of the universality of the law of necessary causality. If it were universally valid, freedom, of course, would be impossible. Wittingly or unwittingly thinking it to be so, some philosophers have found freedom to be inconceivable or, as Hobbes has said, absurd, meaningless.<sup>9</sup> Obsessed with the

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7. Bowne, IPT, 229; quoted by Hildebrand, BSSF, 102.

8. Blanshard, NT, I, 482.

9. Hobbes, Lev., 32-33.



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idea of the absolute rule of mechanical causality, then, determinists not only deny freedom, but thinkers who sense the necessity of it hesitate to acknowledge it. Later it will appear that Locke is one of this latter group who are forever haunted by the ghost of freedom yet cannot shake off the trammels of necessity.

Enthralling, captivating, overwhelming though the altar of necessity be, it is an altar to an unknown god whose universality has never been proved and, by the nature of the concept, never can be proved by finite minds. The principle of natural causality, even when not intended as universal, is a postulate which goes far beyond the given facts in order best to interpret the meanings of a restricted area of experience. It applies basically to the physical realm, but even here it is a postulate never wholly proved. When applied not only to the physical realm, but also to the psychological, and affirmed, in addition, as exhausting the activity of the rational, spiritual, personal realms; when it is insisted that it is a principle universally valid, then the gulf between well-warranted postulation and unwarranted dogmatism widens fearfully. Then mechanism becomes an empty name,<sup>10</sup> "a mere conception fulminated as a dogma"<sup>11</sup> and suggesting in its adherents

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10. James, WB, 147.

11. Ibid., 156. *Ibid.*, 11, 381-382; quoted by James, WB, 148, n.



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only a temper of intellectual absolutism, a demand that the world shall be a solid block, subject to one control,--which temper, which demand, the world may not be bound to gratify at all.<sup>12</sup>

The thesis to be defended here is that that demand is not gratified at all.

a. Stated in the form of the negative argument for freedom, the thesis is this, that the principle of universal, necessary causality is an unwarranted postulate. This may be said first of all because

(1) It lacks much that is required to sustain its claim to universal validity.

(a) Primary, elemental experience, as such, gives no such law and necessitates it not. Sigwart explicitly states the truth of the matter:

So unzweifelhaft es ist, dass alle Welt aus bekannten Fällen auf unbekannte schliesst, ebenso gewiss ist es, dass gerade dieses Verfahren, so lange es sich nur an das von selbst sich darbietende hält, nicht zu der Annahme einer allgemeinen Gleichförmigkeit, sondern nur zu der Annahme führen kann, dass Regel und Regellosigkeit in buntem Wechsel die Welt beherrschen. Für den Standpunkt des strengen Empirismus gibt es aber nichts als die Summe der einzelnen Wahrnehmungen mit ihren Coincidenzen einerseits, ihren Widersprüchen andererseits. Dass mehr Ordnung in der Welt ist, als sie auf den ersten Anblick darbietet, wird erst erkannt, wenn die Ordnung gesucht wird.<sup>13</sup>

(b) Closely related to this is the fact that, even though the data available be admitted to imply causal

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12. Ibid., 157-158.

13. Sigwart, Logik, II, 381-382; quoted by James, WB, 148, n.



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12. Ibid., 137-138.

13. Significant Logic, II, 381-382; quoted by James, WP, 143, n.



necessity in the physical realm, it does not dogmatically prove that it is universal--or even that it is indubitably absolute in that realm. For vast areas of information about the activity of the universe are as yet unexplored, perhaps unthought of. To say dogmatically, in advance of such knowledge, that necessity is a universal law is to go inconceivable distances beyond the warrant of the facts. But worse than that, it is to fly in the face of the facts of a large and important area of experience, the area of human choice. It is one thing, and indispensable, to think beyond the given data; but it is another thing to be so devoted to a single explanatory principle as to permit it to cast its glow over the totality of our experience, so that its color appears to be the color of everything, even if, perhaps, in fact, reality has colors more than one.

But when one suggests the possibility that the realm of persons may somehow be exempt from complete conscription by the office of mechanism, on the grounds that inadequate knowledge challenges the universality of mechanism's authority, determinists, like McTaggart, may reply:

All our most careful examination fails to show us the whole sum of conditions which are necessary in order that a particular volition should be completely determined. But this by no means proves that the whole sum of conditions is not there. For there is another alternative--that we have not powers of observation sufficient to discover them.



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And, except in the case of the human will, this alternative is always adopted.<sup>14</sup>

Several objections must be raised against this. For one thing, the mere absence of complete knowledge is not the only or decisive argument against the determinist's assertion of universal mechanism. The essential contention is that there is a realm of experience, a realm of spiritual persons, in which, though it explain all the activity of the rest of the universe, the principle of necessary causality does not hold. The argument for freedom is not only negative; it is primarily positive; but even its negative argument has weight. And in this instance it may be asserted as follows:

First, if the absence of necessary information does not disprove a point, it even more certainly does not prove it.

Second, if one quietly followed McTaggart's suggestion and assumed the absolute dogma of determinism, he, with McTaggart, would simply pass by the issue. For the issue is just that question of whether determinism, universal, necessary, causality, is true! The seed of controversy is the suspicion that the principle does not hold for spirits or persons. It is more than a suspicion; it is a well-warranted hypothesis, grounded in empirical data, which, though thought by some to be illusory, are, nevertheless, staunch stumbling-blocks for thoroughgoing determinism. In fact, the situation being

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14. McTaggart, SDR, 148-149.



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what it is, it is on the determinist, rather than on the freedomist, that the burden of proof would seem to rest. Even in the absence of the infinite information necessary to the proof of a universal necessity, one might concede the probability of absolute determinism were it not for the stubborn facts of personal activity. But there's the rub! The primary challenge is not to the determinist or freedomist to argue from ignorance either toward or away from the principle of universal mechanism; it is, rather, for the determinist to prove that the experience of seeming free choice is an illusion (even though it is not only spontaneously felt to be free but is also held, by certain thinkers, to point to a principle of freedom which, to them, appears to be indispensable to a coherent and meaningful interpretation of man's, not to mention the universe's, total activity).

In the third place, though custom, as McTaggart suggests, does favor complete surrender to the principle of necessary causality, competent and independent thinkers do not always yield to its lotus lure. Arthur Compton, Sir Arthur Eddington,  
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15. Jeans, NBS, 271-272.



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believers in a finite God reject the urgings of the absolutists to accept the attitude of science and concede that all is good and evil mere illusion.

In the general context of the words of McTaggart just criticized, that author argues further:

It is perfectly impossible for any one to explain why a particular drop of rain falls where it does rather than half an inch away. Yet no one supposes that this event is not completely determined.<sup>16</sup>

Quite true. But how false is the implication he would have men draw. In spite of the suggestive leading of this statement, the fact is that no one supposes that that event is of exactly the same nature as an event in the human mind. Nor does anyone seriously insist (surely it is not necessary that we believe) that the rain drop deliberated, in reflective thought, for hours or days, perhaps for weeks, as to where, precisely, it would finally drop down.

(c) Inadequate information was the second obstacle to a complete proof of universal mechanism; the third is the fact, already touched on, that even in the physical realm the data available to men of science are differently interpreted; so that, while many still hold to the postulate of necessary causality, others hold to a principle of indeterminacy, claiming, in at least one instance, that this new principle "is the most significant revolution in the history of scientific

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thought."<sup>17</sup> How much significance is to be attached to this revolutionary view is not yet clear and may not be for many years, but it is pertinent to remark that leaders in science are willing to risk their reputations in affirming it and that, if it is not conceded as successfully cancelling the principle of determinism, it tends at least to remove it farther from the sanctified cloisters of dogmatism.<sup>18</sup> One thing is clear beyond a doubt, and that is that science no longer conceives its laws as statements of absolute necessities; it holds them, rather, to be statements of "the probable behaviour of enormous aggregates of particles,"<sup>19</sup> of the "chance" of an event's occurrence,<sup>20</sup> of statistical approximations.<sup>21</sup> As a consequence, something of the a priori strength of the deterministic argument is bled away. In the light of the charge of Hudson that indeterminacy in nature would make prediction and, therefore, freedom impossible, it must be affirmed, to the contrary,<sup>22</sup> that such indeterminacy as is in any sense admissible obviously does not dissolve the fact of the dominance of uniformity in nature; uniformity, probability, are all that freedom requires.

(d) But even more decisive against the determinist's

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- 17. Compton, FM, 7; cf. Brightman, ML, 77.
  - 18. Compton, FM, 23-24; cf. Brightman, ML, 20.
  - 19. Blanshard, NT, I, 477.
  - 20. Compton, FM, 25, 31.
  - 21. Brightman, ML, 280.
  - 22. Hudson, PLBH, 38.

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18. Gompson, M. V. 45.
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theory of the self is the clear truth that, by virtue of the nature of the subject-matter, science cannot pronounce the final word. For science not only deals primarily with events that have actually occurred, but, in dealing with human<sup>23</sup> choice, seeks to interpret events which, in each instance, are absolutely unique, never repeated. Such events can never be reconstructed and objectively examined under ideal conditions at the convenience of investigators. When a person makes a choice, he is never again the same. Now science formulates its laws on the basis of data which can be "isolated, observed, and controlled," and, at least equally important, repeated!<sup>24</sup> As a consequence, though science has been able to lay down laws for the physical, and, in some measure, for the psychological realms of activity, it has not yet, because of the elusive and ever-changing character of persons, been able to discover any scientific laws of human choice.<sup>24</sup>

(e) Finally, that the postulate of determinism goes beyond its warrant is seen in this. In the absence of decisive proof to the contrary and of another principle which is even more useful in the abstract realm of science, scientists and philosophers, if they find it advances knowledge, are justified in assuming necessary causality to be the law of nature; for by its assumption, "an objective order as distinguished

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23. James, SB, 152.

24. Brightman, ML, 278-279, 282.



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from chaotic subjective experience," with which they can deal constructively, is assured. But the same argument does not hold for subjective experience. The fact of subjective experience is undeniable, "however it is ordered. The type of causality to be found in it therefore remains an open question."<sup>25</sup>

(2) Yet mechanism is a principle relatively true.

Simply because the principle of mechanism is suggested to be less than universally valid, it is not to be understood that it does not apply at all; for this latter cannot be proved, and is by no means essential to freedom. Like other abstractions, it may well hold for abstracted realms of experience; but even if true for science, it is only relatively true. It may be granted, too, that it holds in certain areas of psychology; but it must also be insisted that there are many data, even in the physical and psychological, but especially in the spiritual, realms (organisms, purposes, values, ideals, empirical freedom) that appear to require another principle, or other principles (not only mechanism, but organism, co-operation, conscious purpose)<sup>26</sup> of explanation. So that mechanism must be recognized, at best, as but explaining only a part of the whole of reality.<sup>27</sup>

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25. Ibid., 279.

26. Sorley, MV, Chapter XVI; Gamertsfelder and Evans, FP, 567.

27. Brightman, ITP, 310-311.

28. Cf. Stewart, 1915, II, 361-362.

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(3) Mechanism, as a conception, is dependent on mind.

Another consideration, which not only implies the relativity of mechanism but also asserts the primacy of another principle, is the fact that mechanism, in order even to be conceived, depends on a principle of selective and creative thought. When the scientist formulates the law of causality, he not only abstracts from the data of purpose, value, and the like, but he fully recognizes that his data are selected; not only in this sense does he select, but also in the sense that, within the realm of his abstraction, his data are only partial. From this limited, abstracted body of data, the scientist formulates his law--by means of the creative power of thought. Neither the data singly nor the data as a group, apart from the activity of mind, are more  
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than isolated perceptions. But by its creative activity, the mind formulates, from these data, the law of causality. The principle of mechanistic causality, logically and, quite possibly, ontologically, depends on a thinking mind. And the attribute of creativity is not incidental or insignificant. It is vital. It means that, though there may be logical necessity in thinking, mechanistic necessity is an inadequate principle of explanation. It means that, whereas thinking is indispensable to the formulation of the law of mechanism, mechanism is insufficient to account for the

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28. Cf. Sigwart, Logik, II, 381-382.

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(4) Mechanism, like any theory, can be proved only if freedom is real.

But more important than the fact, then, is the significance of the fact. Not only is it true that the principle of mechanism depends for its existence on mind and

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29. Cf. Hocking, SBF, 161, on the one law to which all others are relative--the law of meaning.

30. Gamertsfelder and Evans, FP, 567.

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intelligence, and that the creative activity of thought can scarcely be explained short of a degree of freedom from mechanistic necessity; but it appears that neither mechanism nor freedom (or the principles of creativity, emergence,<sup>32</sup> organization, co-operation, organicism, and evolution) could be intelligibly affirmed to be true or false unless<sup>33</sup> the freedom of the mind is presupposed, unless it is conceded that normal minds may, if they freely will it, impose on themselves the objective ideal of logic or coherence, carry on investigation and discussion, check each other's errors in reasoning, in short, affirm or deny the objective truth of the claims made for any hypothesis. If men were not free to do this, if men were completely determined by what had gone before, all conclusions would be equally necessary, equally effects of causes, neither true nor false, simply facts. Any pretense or claim to "knowledge" would be absurd; men might conceivably possess truth, but they could not know which of their conclusions were the true ones and they would be utterly incapable of proving anything they affirmed.

If this be true, the determinist has the unpleasant disadvantage of inadvertently insisting that his argument is no more to be accepted than any other, that his principle is but a necessary effect, neither true nor false, a mere

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32. Gamertsfelder and Evans, FP, 567.

33. Brightman, Art.(1940), 504.

34. Cf. Spaulding, WAF, 42-44, where he argues similarly.

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fact; whereas the freedomist has the distinct satisfaction of providing a principle with which his own claim may be tested and without which neither it nor any other can be proved. In fact, it is this consideration, this dilemma in which one must choose between freedom and skepticism, that completely undermines the otherwise impressive and quite persuasive claims of determinism and, strange language though it may seem, necessitates the postulate of freedom.<sup>34</sup>

b. The positive argument for freedom, then, is simply this, that it makes possible a more complete, consistent, and coherent interpretation of experience than mechanism could conceivably allow.

It was suggested that one of the roots of the traditional controversy about freedom was the assumption of universal, necessary causality; and it was asserted that that assumption was unwarranted. And by the collapse of that dogma, the principle of freedom was seen to be at least possible. In this negative manner, in fact, it was affirmed to be indispensable. But it is not enough to try to support freedom simply by denying determinism; it is better to set forth, as well, positive arguments which justify it. It must be acknowledged immediately that, like determinism, freedom is a postulate which cannot be completely proved on the basis of comprehensive empirical data. Just as the

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determinist cannot prove the deterministic nature of the self's choices, so the freedomist is unable to demonstrate the claim that choices are made freely. But the principle of freedom can be shown to possess a higher degree of probability because, unlike the theory of determinism which, in its implications, is self-destructive and self-contradictory, the principle of freedom is indispensable to a consistent, coherent interpretation of man's total experience.

(1) Freedom is the presupposition of all proving.

One of the most decisive reasons for this affirmation of freedom, as has already been suggested, is the fact that freedom is the presupposition of all knowledge and every claim that a conclusion is true or false. Unless freedom is presupposed, every thought and claim of every man in every degree of health and sanity, at every age and in every century, is equally necessitated, equally an effect, and men are not only left without any way of knowing truth from error and, thus, with those all-important concepts altogether meaningless, but must stand in wonder and amazement before the bewildering fact that out of unique selves characterized by unique orders of experience (the order of events being decisive in determining what the outcome of the causal series from moment to moment will be) come conclusions held almost in common. Two different persons, unique selves, (Darwin and Wallace), come independently to

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similar conclusions concerning evolution; at different places in Europe and at the same time, and even earlier in China, unique persons with unique orders of experience come to the same effect--the discovery of gunpowder. On the basis of determinism, the consequence of men's being unique selves with unique orders of experience is unique effects, unique conclusions; yet the stubborn and unalterable fact is that men hold many conclusions almost in common. So determinism not only destroys all possibility of proof and leads to skepticism, at the same time being burdened with explaining how unique series of causes come constantly to numerous common effects; but freedom makes proof possible and readily explains how it is that unique experiences can, in spite of their uniqueness, come to common "effects," common conclusions. Without freedom, argument descends from the presentation and weighing of evidence and reasons to the causal, the cause to effect, relation of the determined pounding of men's determined minds against each other. In other words, only because men are free are they able to impose on themselves at any moment, and in spite of nature's tendency to drive them in a different direction than that of thinking, the ideal of logic, or coherence, or scientific method. Nature scarcely drives men to them, else how widespread would men's wisdom be! And only as men

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35. Spaulding, WAI, 42-44.





do surrender to the objective ideal of logic, or coherence, or scientific method can they test the validity of any claim, distinguish between degrees of truth and error, and come to a body of objectively valid knowledge. Man gets beyond skepticism and is capable of knowledge only because he is free.

(2) Freedom is the presupposition of morality.

Without freedom, all men's choices are equally necessitated and there is no essentially moral difference between right and wrong, good and bad, and there are no moral grounds for praise and blame. Apart from an objective standard in the light of which men can judge right and wrong, in the light of which they can decide to act rightly or wrongly, how can there be any warranted sense of responsibility and, therefore, justified praise and blame?

The determinist, again in the words of McTaggart, answers: "We approve or condemn whatever tends to produce good or evil results, without further consideration."<sup>36</sup>

But if men are inescapably determined to such and such preferences concerning what is good and evil, who is to say what is good? An objective (as opposing subjective and purely individual) standard is essential to men's making judgments of good or bad. But more important still, even if McTaggart's needs are granted and the above criticism is

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36. McTaggart, SDR, 154.

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not enforced, the fact remains that the "good" and "evil" of the determinist's usage carries nothing of the meaning essential to morality. Though men be completely determined, they can do things that seemed good to themselves and others; but if men are determined, they never merit praise or blame. Such judgments are no less relevant to sticks and stones that serve or frustrate the realization of our purposes, to soothing rain in a desert or an earthquake when a city is already on fire, than to the activities of determined automatons. For equally, the activity could have been no other; the automatons could not have done differently. On the other hand, because men are free, they can be prohibited from doing a good act that they willed, yet merit praise because they willed it; they may, of necessity, do evil in McTaggart's sense, in spite of a good will, yet merit no blame; or they may will evil and unwittingly do good, yet never merit commendation for it. Though actual achievement is of great practical importance, morality essentially roots in the will and its freedom to choose between better and worse. Thus, though punishment is warranted even for determinists--because it acts as a determinant against men's doing "evil," it carries, for them, no overtone of moral censure, for the person could do no other.

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basis of freedom is the inescapable experience of responsibility as it is associated with regret. Either these are real or illusory; but, if illusory, how ironic that we should possess them so persistently. And if illusory, how utterly unintelligible in the light of the theory of evolution which holds that the useless and meaningless surely pass away.<sup>38</sup> How strange, indeed, that, not passing away, they rather become more surely a part of men as the centuries unfold! How utterly fiendish and absurd they are on the determinist's presupposition--men agonizing for errors that they could not avoid, men remorseful for crimes they had to commit! But how thoroughly consistent are responsibility and regret with the presupposition of freedom, the assumption that, within limits, that which men left undone they might have done, that which they did they need not have done--on many occasions possessing free choice among several alternative possibilities.<sup>39</sup> It is enough for present purposes to show that freedom is the presupposition of significant morality, but it is not irrelevant to add that, if men took the deterministic theory seriously and believed they were not responsible for their actions and not able to select freely among alternatives, they would, in good numbers at least, swiftly surrender to lower living, sensuously

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38. Gamertsfelder and Evans, FP, 569.

39. James, WB, 175.

40. Gamertsfelder and Evans, FP, 569.





rejoicing in their treasured irresponsibility.

(3) Freedom is the presupposition of men's controlling mechanism.

Closely related to thought and morality is the technique of control. Like them, it is most intelligible on the presupposition of freedom. If men are mere puppets pulled by the strings of the cosmic process and necessary causal laws, how strange it is that these puppets should, themselves, pull strings on the cosmic mechanism and pull them toward what appear to be nonmechanical, nonnecessitated, ideal ends. Admittedly, one mechanism might control another, as when an erupting volcano, by its lava flow alters the processes unfolding on the surface of the earth over which it moves; but this would not be control according to an ideal end not necessitated by the mechanism's necessary nature. But man's control seems to be aimed at any one of a great variety of ends, not one necessitated end, and utilizes innumerable specific mechanisms.

(a) Men are continually subordinating both physical and psychological mechanisms to their purposes. Men of science, through thought and experimentation under the self-imposed ideal of logic and scientific method, have come to understand and, as a consequence, to control and direct the mechanisms of the physical world. Simple illustrations of

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such occurrences are at every hand. By the choice of man, by his own will's decision, two flowers are combined in a third, two fruits are blended into a third, a horse and an ass are united to produce a mule, one's arm is raised rather than lowered, one holds his breath instead of breathing. In every case, mechanisms are at work, but man has determined the direction of nature from all the possibilities within nature and her laws. Psychologists, by free inquiry, have discovered mechanisms of consciousness which the mind uses in carrying out its purposes. When one strives to recall, he often proceeds by using the mechanism of the association of ideas; in the "realization of values....if there were no physiological mechanisms, we could not depend on any striving's having any success...." <sup>41</sup> By means of these mechanisms, one may freely choose to align his will with the beautiful instead of the ugly, the good instead of the evil, the true instead of the false. In short, men control and use, for the realization of their own purposes, the mechanisms of the physical and psychological realms. Now if men's minds were completely determined by these laws and processes, how, possibly, could they determine, control, and utilize them, except mechanically as lava influences the earth which it covers or as fire blindly and mechanically

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41. Brightman, ITP, 312.

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burns wood? The most coherent answer is that men's minds are not wholly determined, are in a measure free, and may, therefore, become the masters of mechanisms,<sup>42</sup> freely subordinating them to their own freely formulated purposes.

(b) Man considers himself rightfully the master not only of inanimate things, but of all living creatures; the whole world was made for man, not man for the world. Even irreligious men, living by the song of the psalmist, unwittingly sing:

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.<sup>43</sup>

But why? What single reason can defend this intuition if men are not of a higher order than sticks and stones, swordfish and sheep? This intuition is best defended on the presupposition of man's spiritual nature and his membership in an order which stands, in essence, above the chain of determined things and animals which subserve his purposes.<sup>44</sup> In the light of what has been said concerning a principle which is indispensable to reason and morality, what better justifies his intuition of dominance, what better grounds

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42. Cf. Spaulding, WAI, 65; Brightman, ITP 313.

43. Psalm 8:5-8.

44. Anshen, FM, 3.

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42. Cf. Spaulding, Wal. 53; Brighman, ITI 213.  
 43. Psalm 8:6-8.  
 44. Aranson, WM, 3.



his spirituality, than the reality of man's freedom. Man is warranted in subjecting the world, including its animal life, because he is spiritual, because he is free; man, though physically weak by comparison, is able to subject the world in large degree, especially its animal life, because his freedom enables him to think and to create.

(c) More important still, why man's eternal concern for the well-being of humanity (why, especially, the everlasting struggle for the freedom and peace of men in the world and the construction of rational and ethical governments) if, for one thing, man is not the free spirit of dignity and worth (born in freedom and meriting freedom) that this social concern presupposes and if, in the second place, he is completely determined by the past and, thus, in reality (whatever his illusions may be), wholly incapable of shaping the future one tiny bit?

It is the point of these comments that it is reasonable for men to attempt to direct and possible for them to succeed in controlling the mechanisms of physical, psychological, animal, and social realms only because they are free.

(4) Freedom is the presupposition of idealism and religion.

Freedom is indispensable to a rational universe and the existence of a significant God; it is essential to idealism and religion. William James points this argument

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in his volume entitled The Will to Believe. It roots in the clear implication of determinism that all men's acts are equally necessitated by the natural and necessary processes of the cosmos. Christ's death on Calvary, Socrates drinking the hemlock, James's impressive "Brockton murder," and the cruelties of the Nazi Party under Hitler and Himmler, are equally inevitable, inescapable, predestined effects of the cosmic nature or the will of its creator or sustainer. Not only natural, but "moral" evil, too, are the necessary consequences of the nature of reality. So the universe or (if, with Goethe, one dare express it) God either makes no distinction between good and evil or is quite incapable of avoiding evils so widespread and of such magnitude that life becomes meaningless and God is seen limited to such an extent, in spirituality or power or both, that he turns out to be wholly unworthy of worship. For a being of the nature implied by determinism is a fearful, fantastic fiend, or hopelessly weak, or worthlessly nonmoral. And, as though that were not enough, this deterministic universe must be seen as adding woeful insult to injury by giving man a sense of moral right and wrong when there is no basis in reality for them and by permeating their spirits with an indestructible ought in a world in which its realization is impossible. But on the basis of the freedom of the self, man

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becomes in large degree responsible for the evils of the moral life he lives, the ought becomes intelligible, and the universe is vindicated of direct responsibility for man's failures while God, though perhaps still finite, is certainly much worthier of worship.

(5) Freedom is the more comprehensive theory.

A concluding positive argument for the theory of freedom, in addition to its deep theoretical significance<sup>46</sup> and the fact that it is assumed by all in practice,<sup>47</sup> is this, that it not only preserves mechanism (in its appropriate<sup>48</sup> realms) as well as free spirits, but actually requires it. Consequently, while determinism dogmatically denies the latter and absolutely affirms the former, freedom coherently relates both. For it recognizes that, while spirits are free, their freedom is made possible and is limited by the reality of mechanisms or, at least, uniformities in nature which make prediction and, therefore, rational choice possible.<sup>49</sup>

#### 4. How freedom expresses itself.

It has been argued that determinism is an untenable theory and that the freedom of the self is an indispensable reality. The next task is the more difficult one of indi-

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46. Gamertsfelder and Evans, FP, 571.

47. Cf. Brightman, ML, 78; Rickaby, FW, 26.

48. Cf. Fraser, LE, I, 372, n.

49. Cf. Brightman, Art.(1940), 494; PR, 381; Rickaby, FW, 4, dubiously states that some acts are "altogether" free.





cating how that freedom finds expression. Here, again, it is impossible to cite every specific detail of empirical evidence that one might desire; consequently, all that can be done is to describe what appears to be the real state of things and let the reader decide whether it is a reasonable interpretation.

a. It is affirmed, first of all, that freedom manifests itself in thinking.

(1) What is not affirmed.

(a) It will not be argued that logical necessity is an illusion or that a perfect being, in perfect thinking, would fail to be necessitated to one inescapable conclusion; rather, it will be conceded that logical necessity is a reality and that perfect coherence would involve complete necessitation in the relation of all ideas. It will further be conceded that, when men think under the ideal of logic, to the degree to which logic is actually obeyed and the content of their minds is adequate, their conclusions will be determined and adequate. But all such determination is essentially logical, not causal, and does not oppose the freedom of the self.

(b) It will also be admitted that all men are limited and, in this sense and in this degree, determined by the quickness of the responses of their psychological mechanisms,

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50. Blanshard, NT, I, 485; II, 264-266, 435.

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their available physical and mental energy on each occasion, slips in memory, notation, measurement, and vision, by health, habits, and integration of personality, by their own potentiality for thinking, their former training and skill in thinking, the scope of the world of ideas and desires into which they have thus far entered, and the skill they have developed in directing and holding their attention to a task. <sup>51</sup> These limitations and determinations are not denied.

(2) What is affirmed.

(a) In spite of and in the light of the past of heredity and environment and, in many instances, in spite of the strongest desire of the present, men are free to think or not to think about speculative problems or choices to be made. In spite of the strongest urgings to the contrary, men can, by the power of their wills, commit their attention and energies to the arduous task of thinking; or, in spite of the fact that they know they ought to stop and think, they can freely surrender to impulse. Whether the laws of logic are discerned by men at a certain stage in their development purely of necessity is a moot question. In any eventuality, it is not a decisive one for freedom. For (and this is the point of importance) the laws of logic (a) are themselves uncaused, eternally given, and, therefore,

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51. Cf. Spaulding, WAI, 48; Thomson, SHA, 190.

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apart from all our uneasinesses or drives or desires, are objectively valid and, when properly employed, lead men not to subjectively necessary effects, but to objective truth, and (b) even if men are compelled to discover these laws of logic, men, obviously, are not compelled either to serve them or to reject them. It is in the objectivity of logic and other ideals and in the freedom to impose them on oneself or to reject them that men's freedom consists so far as thinking is concerned.

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(b) Having freely chosen to impose on himself the ideal of logic or coherence or scientific method or mathematics, one is able to continue the exercise of his freedom, in that he may think hastily, and come to one conclusion; or he may think more carefully about the data that spring spontaneously to his mind, and come to another conclusion; or he may freely choose to withhold his judgment until he has freely labored to recall all he can possibly recapture of relevant data (at the same time rejecting ideas that he counts irrelevant), and thereby come to another conclusion, or he may deliberately decide to spend several months or several years acquiring additional relevant data on the basis of which he will be driven to still another conclusion. So a man is, even after he has surrendered to the determining

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52. Cf. Bowne, Per., 161, 205; Brightman, Art.(1940), 492; ML, 282-283; Hildebrand, BSSF, v.

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laws of logic, in a good measure, free. And a man's conclusions about a problem will be one thing or another, depending not only on factors over which he has little or no control but on the intensity and attentiveness with which he investigates and thinks about his problem or his alternatives. The thesis here affirmed is that that intensity and attentiveness are factors which can be freely determined by the free self; it is in harmony with Blanshard's statement that "mind itself is irreducibly purposive and will elude the grasp of mechanism always."<sup>53</sup> Much as one might wish the contrary, truth is not simply forced upon us; we arrive at a measure of it only as we freely will to pay the price for it. And the more rigorously and coherently we exert ourselves, all other things being equal, the more we come to know. How we might wish sometimes that, in a sense at least, we were determined to think and to think thoroughly and accurately; how we might wish that thinking did not require such a resolute direction of our wills--though our strongest desire urges us strenuously in another direction; how we might wish that, to succeed in thinking, we simply surrendered to our greatest present uneasiness or our strongest desire; how great the advantages would seem if the same results could be secured by the determination from the past as by the laborious commitment of ourselves

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53. Blanshard, NT, I, 480.

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to the demands of logic when it would be so much easier spontaneously to play or sing or lose ourselves in dreaming. But the sober truth is that the way of the thinker is hard; he is not driven of necessity to thinking or to soundly coherent conclusions, but is given to thinking and attains to conclusions primarily as he freely chooses to pursue thought.

(3) The significance of the theory.

Such a conception of the self in its thinking not only makes knowledge and its verification possible and truth and error intelligible. It also gives meaning to the otherwise fruitless activity of hesitation, doubt, questioning, meditation, evaluation, reflection; for if the self's whole activity and unfolding experience are completely determined in advance, these experiences are superfluous gymnastics, to which, nevertheless, those who are considered the wisest and most virtuous give themselves most extravagantly and, on determinist terms, quite foolishly. If these experiences are utterly inconsequential and insignificant, it would seem that nature would not long tolerate such delaying blockages, would rather ride, roughshod and irresistible, down its destined way. But it was also said that this way of looking at the self in its thinking makes truth and error intelligible; and it does. But they must be conceived, on this theory, never as absolutes but always as degrees of truth, as more or less adequately coherent interpretations

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he is not driven or necessarily to thinking or to seriously  
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to conclusions primarily as he freely chooses to pursue  
thought.

(3) The significance of the theory.

Such a conception of the self in its thinking not only  
makes knowledge and its verification possible and truth and  
error intelligible. It also gives meaning to the otherwise  
fruitless activity of hesitation, doubt, questioning, med-  
itation, evaluation, reflection; for if the self's whole  
activity and unfolding experience are completely determined  
in advance, these experiences are superfluous. In fact,  
to which, nevertheless, those who are considered the wisest  
and most virtuous give themselves most extravagantly and  
on determinist terms, quite foolishly. If these experiences  
are utterly inconsequential and insignificant, it would  
seem that nature would not long tolerate such glaring  
blockages, would rather ride, roughshod and irresistible,  
down its destined way. But it was also said that this way  
of looking at the self in its thinking makes truth and error  
intelligible; and it does. But they must be conceived, on  
this theory, never as absolutes but always as degrees of  
truth, as more or less adequately coherent interpretations



which, for finite minds, are never complete and perfect. Whatever else conspires to make for truth and error, then, a highly significant factor is the intensity of purpose with which the self freely pursues the task of enlarging its experience and ordering it under the self-imposed ideal of logic, coherence, scientific method, or mathematics. Because this task can be freely taken up or laid down from time to time, because men can return to their old data, or add new data, and bring them all before the same objective bar of logic and coherence whenever they freely will to do so (again, other things being normal), they can verify their knowledge and add to it from day to day.

b. Freedom manifests itself in choosing.

It has been argued that freedom manifests itself in thinking. It must now be explicitly emphasized (though it has already been suggested) that that freedom to think or not to think, that freedom which accompanies every moment of the process of thinking despite its determination under the laws of logic, is identical with the self's freedom to choose among alternatives in practical and moral situations. Not only is the self free in thinking about theoretical problems; it is free also to judge alternative courses of overt action and to choose to follow any of the possible alternatives. As Brightman suggests, the word "possible" may be adequately defined as meaning that which is "thinkable and consistent with the facts and laws of the field in

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which the choice is made." Just as, on many occasions, the self can consider the alternatives of sweet surrender to spontaneous desire or critical examination, of dreaming and drifting in pleasant reverie or attentive reflection on a theoretical problem, so the self can consider the various alternatives presented by any occasion and, as in the instances just referred to, having considered, can freely select the one that it will follow.

(1) Deliberation and possibilities.

Now it is often argued that all this is an illusion, that this seeming freedom to choose among seeming possibilities is not real. In the view of certain thinkers, such a theory is absurd. Hobbes and his deterministic successors, for example, among whom, in important respects, Locke is one, insist that every moment and movement of one's materialistic existence is absolutely determined; every act of deliberation is but a conflict of emotions and desires. It will be conceded to the determinist that deliberation is a state of conflict; but it must be speedily added that it is no mere emotional upheaval or blind contending of forces for sheer selfish pleasure. It is the sign of a free spirit blocking the spontaneous and (if it were so) irresistible onward drive of an otherwise puppet-person; it is the clear indication that men are more than puppets. They are not

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merely pushed and pulled (though admittedly they are that in part); they also push and pull! They are mechanistically driven to a spontaneous act; rather, they would be--were it not that the self can stop the whole drive and, in many instances, suspend its onward movement indefinitely.

Again, as has been remarked in another connection, if deliberation is a wholly insignificant, nonspiritual, natural, expression of a wholly determined self, how is it that nature's relentless course tolerates such trifling at all? How is it that evolution preserves it? How is it that, instead of discarding it and going on smoothly, nature, in the form of almost every self on the human level, gives so much of her time and energy to it? Is it not a more coherent interpretation to acknowledge deliberation for what it not only seems to be, but for what it must be if thought, morality, social reconstruction, and religion are to embody the significance men insist they have?

Further than this, if it be admitted that in deliberation about alternatives men do actually suspend the onward movement and fulfillment of so-called necessary mechanical processes, then it would seem more reasonable to acknowledge the seeming possibilities to be real ones. For it is less antagonistic to the idea of process that causes be fraught with possible effects than that the process should

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be blocked completely. In other words, it seems a far greater achievement for a free spirit to stop the whole process and power of nature's course than for it merely to utilize nature's power and control it only so much as to steer it slightly into any one of several alternative directions. Yet even determinists admit empirical deliberation; but they completely deny real alternatives.

Further still, though it be conceded that determinism is a readily conceivable principle in abstraction, it must be insisted that on specific occasions of even trivial choices, such as James's choice of the street he will take home, it requires the extremest will to believe that the choice of either street would not have been equally compatible with all that had gone before in the universe and in himself.

## (2) Limits and rigors of deliberation.

Concerning this matter of one's deliberating about possible alternatives, Schneider writes:

Being obliged to "stop and think" is often an embarrassing predicament rather than an opportunity. And even when welcome, the necessity of choosing between alternatives is not ipso facto "free determination"; it is often a genuine and external obstacle.<sup>56</sup>

These remarks prompt the re-emphasis of points that are pertinent here, namely, that (1) on a freedomistic theory,

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56. Schneider, Art.(1940.

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one is by no means "obliged" to think; he is often free, however, to think or not to think and to think with various degrees of intensity; (2) freedom does not mean caprice, complete unrelatedness of the self's activity to ideas, satisfactions, mechanisms, consequences, ideals, ends, persons, or lack of limitation by the present field of choice; (3) freedom, rather, requires law, order, uniformity, predictability. That which partially limits and determines the self also makes its freedom possible.

### (3) Ideals, ideas, and desires.

In relation to the affirmation that deliberate, free choice is possible, one critical remark which the determinist may make is this: When you think you are judging desires, impulses, and alternatives and, in the light thereof, making free choices from among them, what you are really doing is rationalizing, objectifying, your present desire. That raises the question whether ideals are mere objectifications of desire, projections of slyly working, necessary, motives, and whether they, either as objective ideals or necessary motives, inevitably determine us. If, in both instances, the answer in the negative can be supported, real freedom will have been shown to be probable; that answer in the negative can be supported.

(a) Ideals are more than values experienced or desires realized; they go beyond, are not exhausted by, the complex experiences of value already attained. To be sure, ideals

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(5) Ideas are more than values experienced or desires realized; they go beyond, are not exhausted by, the complex experiences of value already attained. To be sure, ideas



are formulated from our crude spontaneous value experiences; but ideals are values criticized and crowned with a beauty never yet experienced as such; like theoretical postulates that go beyond the given data, so moral ideals go beyond the given data of value. Ideals are not exhausted in their contributing causes; they are complex causes or values experienced, plus something beyond. Values experienced are present; ideals are yet to be realized. As Sorley says; The moral idea or ideal, for example, "is a selective principle which functions as a guide to striving and which may determine as well as be determined by feeling." This something new that goes beyond all that is given in mere feeling or values experienced is a discovery of a free spirit in its ideal-comprehending activity. Ideals are rationally criticized and formulated concepts which may or may not in present fact be desired. The ideal of goodness, even if not desired, is recognized as having "undoubted authority for the direction of" men's lives. And as men yield in obedience to it, they escape from enslavement to natural necessity. Sometimes such ideals are neither desired nor pursued; sometimes they are not desired but are nevertheless pursued (though some natural appeal be exceedingly strong); sometimes they may not be desired at first but, by

57. Sorley, MV, 190-192.

58. Ibid., 69.

59. Sorley, MV, 352-353.





some mysterious activity involved in contemplation of them, come to be desired. One reason why ideals and ideas free men from natural necessity is already beginning to appear and will be discussed shortly, namely, that ideas frequently precede desire and that even desires may be created by the free self. Hedonism is seen, then, as a misuse of words or as a basically inadequate theory of the self. But the central point is that ideals are not mere rationalizations or objectifications of desire; they are rationally formulated and objectively valid concepts which are related to causes but which are something more.

(b) More important, however, is the fact that even as logical laws are objectively valid but need not necessarily be imposed on oneself, so moral ideals, though acknowledged to be binding on all enlightened mankind, need not necessarily be pursued or obeyed. In other words, a self is free (Locke to the contrary) either to accept or reject an acknowledged moral ideal as an end to be sought and served, whether it is most strongly desired or not. If a determinist denies that one is free to do this, admitting that he is determined by his present purpose to prove that he is free, one may give himself indifferently but freely, one after another, to devotion to the ideals, first, of honesty, then of courage, then of cruelty, then of industry,

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and still later of self-sacrifice. He can make any one of several consciously considered ideals, however contradictory, the immediate end of his actions; and a man who can freely do this in relation to ideals that have objective validity is what is meant by a free man.

(c) This recalls again the significant fact that ideas frequently precede desires; so that apart from desires, ideas and ideals can be rationally criticized in terms of their coherence with a man's total experience and possibilities. George E. Moore notes the significance of this fact, though he affirms the idea to exist simultaneously with the desire (which it often does) and fails to note that it often precedes it, when he admits that the idea may be said<sup>61</sup> "to be a cause of that desire." To express it otherwise and to suggest its full significance, this means that, apart from any necessary motive, ideas may be considered in terms of what they are and what they imply when executed in action; and, in the light of such criticism, one of them may be selected and raised by the choosing self into a motive or end to be sought. In such circumstances, too (if only to prove that one is free to do it), one may select and pursue an idea which leads to the greatest misfortune while rejecting another which promised the highest happiness.

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61. Art.(1940), 665; cf. Locke, 47; all subsequent footnotes, in which only an Arabic number is used, refer to Locke's Essay, II, xxi, the Arabic number denoting the section of the chapter.

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(d) All this leads to another consideration that hedonistic determinists overlook, namely, that there is a difference between desire and obligation and that only in a free spirit does obligation become intelligible. According to the determinist, obedience to desire is necessitated. But if (as he must to defend his theory) he includes the sense of obligation under the concept of "uneasiness" and desire, his argument is undermined by this other consideration that the uneasiness of obligation never quite necessitates fulfillment. How often one feels a sense of obligation, yet ignores it. The determinist says this occurs because a still greater uneasiness compelled him. But one may also fulfill a sense of obligation in spite of the fact that his fulfilling it (he knows full well) will bring him the greatest possible uneasiness. Certainly the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is such an illustration; it may have satisfied his own soul--but his own satisfaction surely was not the prime motive in his act. How impotent would be his name had it been. As T. S. Eliot has expressed it in his Murder in the Cathedral:

The last temptation is the greatest treason:  
To do the right deed for the wrong reason.

Yet how powerful has been his name through succeeding centuries! Both biography and psychology make it clear beyond a doubt that self-sacrifice distinctly differs from the satisfaction of desire and that surrender to the strongest



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uneasiness is far different from resolution to fulfill an obligation. It is James, again, who makes significant comment on the difference between the experience of desire and the experience of responding to a sense of ought when he reminds us that

we feel, in all hard cases of volition, as if the line taken, when the rarer and more ideal motives prevail, were the line of greater resistance, and as if the line of coarser motivation were the more previous and easy one, even at the moment when we refuse to follow it.<sup>62</sup>

There is a real difference between desire and ought which the hedonistic determinist does not amply consider; and the fact is, as Brightman has expressed it, that "the claim that 'all persons ought' to do so and so is logically and ethically futile unless all persons can do what they ought to."<sup>63</sup>

(4) A free self is neither unrelated to nor wholly determined by necessary motives.

It is perhaps well to re-emphasize that this argument is not based on any such idea as that the free self is unrelated to desires and motives. Certainly it is related to them; but equally certainly it is not completely determined by them, as would be an automaton or puppet. It can judge them and it can select from them in the light of their coherence with an ideal of life that one holds, having

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62. James, PP, II, 548; suggested by Thomson, SHA, 183; cf. Kant, KpV, A210-212.

63. Brightman, ML, 283.

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65

freely chosen it for himself. So long as he resolves to be loyal to that ideal--if he consciously imposes one on himself--so long he is determined by it, whether his ideal is his surrendering to impulses and uncriticized motives and desires, or his proving that hedonism is false by deliberately enduring suffering which he might readily avoid, or his judging certain things to be best and defiantly doing their opposites, or his judging things to be best and faithfully pursuing them. So long as he thoughtlessly surrenders to impulse (foregoing his freedom to think) and so long as, having selected an ideal, he faithfully pursues it, he is determined by it; but the important point to be noted is that a man is free to decide for himself, within limits, of course, what it is that shall determine him.

For even under the determination of an ideal to which one has surrendered, thereby transforming an ideal into his motive, a person has a large measure of freedom in deciding on the specific means by which he will seek to achieve his grand ideal. He may want to lead the most reasonable life possible, or to serve Christ, or to increase the well-being of humanity. But how? Shall he teach, preach, become a chaplain, man a gun, write for the newspaper, enter politics? Far from being wholly determined to follow one way, he may

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65. Cf. Compton, FM, 55; Rickaby, RW, 27.

66. Even McTaggart acknowledges that this is possible; SDR, 149.

67. Cf. Gross, Art.(1940), 167.



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65. Cf. Compton, *ibid.*, 33; Rieckhoff, *ibid.*, 37.  
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have great difficulty in deciding on any one of them, so perplexed and so uncertain he may be as to which is best suited to serve his end. And the difficulty is not emotional; it is a matter of knowledge; and the matter of knowledge is unnecessitated and may be decisive in determining the way he will go.

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It has already been shown how in instances of thinking and judging such as this, varied conclusions are all equally possible depending in good measure on the intensity and comprehensiveness with which one freely wills to pursue a solution to his problem. As Brand Blanshard has said: This "process of discerning an end to be realized more fully in one good than in another is certainly far removed from the process of being driven by the stronger impulse" or "any movement or collision of atoms or conflict of forces which occur in the physical world."

69

It is even different from complete determination by the grand motive or ideal of one's life.

#### (5) Possibilities and necessity.

Thus the argument leads to the conclusion that, in certain respects, a self or person is free to choose among possibilities given on any specific occasion, and that, therefore, reality must be conceived as not exclusively

68. A, 4, a, (2).

69. NT, I, 484.

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necessary in its causal processes, but as a causality which, at many junctures, because men are spirits, embodies possibilities. "Do not all the motives that assail us spring equally from the soil of the past; and would not either of them, whether realized through chance or through necessity, the moment it was realized, seem to us to fit that past?"<sup>70</sup>

In choosing, then, a person does not defy nature; he simply chooses one of several possibilities potentially contained in and compatible with reality. Thus, though human choices cannot be absolutely predicted, they can be explained after the event.

#### (6) The limitations of freedom.

But these possibilities are at the same time the marks of the limitations to freedom. Though these limitations have been touched upon throughout this discussion, it is not unprofitable now to consider them under a separate heading. Clearly freedom is not mere caprice, spontaneous activity, without rhyme or reason or any bounds; such freedom would be madness, not spiritual personality. What, then, are the limitations of freedom?

##### (a) Logical limitations.

Men, like God, cannot do the logically impossible. Further than that, while one's freedom is constituted in

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70. James, WB, 157; cf. Russell, FO, VII-VIII; Compton, FM, 63-65.

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part by his ability to surrender to the ideal of logic, he is, when pursuing thought, bound by the principles of logic. To the degree to which he is loyal to them, he is bound by them; he has freely chosen, in thinking, to be so bound.

(b) Personal limitations.

Men's freedom is definitely limited by the potentialities with which their physical and psychological heredity has endowed them. Their personalities, their likes and dislikes, their ideals and hopes, are in good measure determined by the environment in which they have been reared.

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The cultural pattern of their family, their church, their town, state, country, world, will definitely contribute to the shaping of one's life and limiting of one's freedom. Here the possibilities of freedom appear to be somewhat proportionate to knowledge; one's limitations are decreased and his possibilities of freedom are enlarged as he gathers information, for example, about the mores of his family, church, community, state, country, world, and the purposes of the universe, and freely and critically thinks about them. By so doing, he deepens his insight and broadens his field of meanings and of ideals from which to select his own. Heredity, environment, cultural influences, and, as well, one's particular personal condition in any moment of decision, all these are limitations of one's freedom.

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71. Cf. Boaz, Art.(1940), 375-380.

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In more explicit detail, then, there are, in addition to the logical limitations, personal limitations such as the quickness of one's psychological mechanisms, present available physical and mental energy, slips in memory, notation, measurement, evaluation, present health, habits of thought and action, personal integration, original and potential capacity for thinking, previous training and experience in thinking, the desires and ideals one has come to know, the extent to which one has developed will power and patience and persistence.

(c) Limitations contained in the physical nature of things.

It is the laws of nature and the possibility of prediction that make freedom possible; but it is also the laws of nature which limit human freedom. Persons are not free to eliminate that phenomenon which is called the law of gravitation; persons cannot alter the fact that human beings beget human beings, horses beget horses, and asses beget asses. Yet, human beings can manipulate the processes of nature so that, by crossing an ass and a horse a mule may be born. Freedom is possible, but it is limited, in this direction, by what nature will permit. So, also, the fact that fire burns cannot be altered by human wit or freedom; but, through freedom, persons may determine just what that process of burning will be applied to, wood, or cloth, palaces or hovels, the cooking of food and the warming of

In more explicit detail, then, there are, in addition to the logical limitations, personal limitations such as the quickness of one's psychological mechanism, present availability of physical and mental energy, slips in memory, isolation, measurement, evaluation, present health, habits of thought and action, personal integration, original and potential capacity for thinking, previous training and experience in thinking, the desires and ideals one has come to know, the extent to which one has developed will power and persistence and heretofore.

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It is the laws of nature and the possibility of freedom that make freedom possible; but it is also the laws of nature which limit human freedom. Persons are not free to eliminate that phenomenon which is called the law of gravitation; persons cannot alter the fact that human beings desire human beings, horses desire horses, and asses desire asses. Yet, human beings can manipulate the processes of nature so that, by exercising an ass and a horse a mile may be born. Freedom is possible, but it is limited, in this direction, by what nature will permit. In, also, the fact that life beings cannot be altered by human will or freedom; but, through freedom, persons may determine just what that process of burning will be applied to, wood, or stone, or pieces of metal, the cooking of food and the wearing of



houses, or the devastation of cities.

(d) The limitations of the field of choice.

Another ever-present limitation to freedom is the alternatives presented by the field of choice. In the instance of breeding, if there are two asses and two horses (in each type, male and female), man's freedom is limited to just three alternatives; namely, another ass, another horse, or a mule. In the choice of a vocation, one without the necessary professional training would find his freedom limited by alternatives which did not include the ministry, law, or medicine. In the choice of the particular form of Christian service a minister will render, whether he will enter the chaplaincy, or teach, or preach, or devote his energies to writing, his freedom in choosing will be limited by his own qualifications; he may be physically unfit for the army; he may be academically unprepared for teaching. In that event, his freedom would be limited to just two possibilities, preaching or writing. Freedom is limited by the given alternatives, that is, those that are conceivable and consistent with the laws of the universe.

(e) Freedom is limited to the initiation of acts.

Another important limitation must be noted, that fact that freedom revolves about moments of choice and decision and goes no farther. One is free to decide to cross a horse and an ass; but after that, nature takes its relentless course and there is little reasonable freedom left to

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(5) The limitations of the field of choice.

Another ever-present limitation to freedom is the alternative presented by the field of choice. In the instance of breeding, if there are two sexes and two horses (in each type, male and female), man's freedom is limited to just three alternatives; namely, another sex, another horse, or a wife. In the choice of a vocation, one without the necessary professional training would find his freedom limited by alternatives which did not include the ministry, law, or medicine. In the choice of the particular form of Christian service a minister will wonder, whether he will enter the chaplaincy, or teach, or preach, or devote his energies to writing. His freedom in choosing will be limited by his own qualifications; he may be physically unfit for the army; he may be ecclesiastically unprepared for teaching. In that event, his freedom would be limited to just two possibilities, preaching or writing. Freedom is limited by the given alternatives, that is, those that are conceivable and consistent with the laws of the universe.

(6) Freedom is limited to the initiation of action.

Another important limitation must be noted, that fact that freedom revolves about moments of choice and decision and goes no further. One is free to decide to cross a river and an end; but after that, nature takes its course and there is little reasonable freedom left to



man to alter it; eventually a mule is born. If a man decides to join the army as a chaplain, his freedom to decide whether he will remain in the service until his term of enlistment has expired is negligible. He freely chooses whether he will submit himself to the jurisdiction of the army; but after that the army makes important decisions for him. After the acts of free persons are initiated, the processes of the universe take control. Medicine is administered by a doctor; nature's processes carry on from there. An aviator drops a bomb; thereafter his freedom is gone as far as the consequences of the act are concerned; the bomb bursts as nature necessitates. One chooses freely to take this train rather than that, but after the decision is made, and one boards the train, the train takes him. One makes his free decisions and the processes and laws of the universe carry them on to their necessary consequences, logical, moral, psychological, and physical.

But, limited as it is, man's freedom is not destroyed; in fact, the same factors that limit it make his freedom possible; for without uniformity and prediction, there could be no rational freedom. Man's freedom is comparable to a bird flying about in a cage; it is free to fly; but it is not free to fly everywhere. So man is free; but he is not free to defy the necessities of logic, the peculiar personal limitations imposed by his heredity, environment, and general cultural pattern, the unwavering processes of nature,

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the limitations of possible alternatives in a specific field of choice, or the inevitable consequences of an act once the act is initiated and is beyond man's power to cancel or recall.

c. Freedom is manifested in action.

Freedom expresses itself in relation to one's power to perform. In a discussion preliminary to a consideration of Locke's freedom, it is imperative that this implication be mentioned for, as will be shown later, Locke very often implies that this is the only significant way in which freedom may be attributed to man. The view is that man's freedom consists not in thinking or in willing (these may be determined absolutely), but in the power to perform that which his will decrees. That is, a man is free when, if he wills to raise his hand, he is able to do so, if, when he wishes to think, his physical and mental state is such as to enable to do so. Specifically, in the realm of morality, this view implies that man's intentions are not essential to morality; it is only the overt consequences of actions that count. If a man wishes to save a life, but has physical handicaps that prohibit it, the act is bad; if a man seeks to take a life, but mistakenly gives his intended victim and companion in the desert water, rather than a water-like, but poisonous liquid, the act is good.

Freedom is not related to a free spirit, as such, but to a man's power to execute what he wills to do, to his

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Freedom is not related to a free spirit, as such, but  
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ability to control his own body, for example, in the fulfilling of his purposes (even though his purposes be completely determined), to his skill and strength in successfully utilizing or opposing the forces of external nature. Does he wish to cross a raging torrent? If he succeeds, he is free. Does he wish to lift a fallen tree from the legs of his comrade? If he is able to do so, he is free.

Now as a matter of fact, this power to perform what one wills is a power of tremendous importance to freedom; without it, any freedom of the will itself would be quite unrelated to everyday experience--for the heart of one's life is one's performing of acts. Both the determinist and freedomist agree that the power to do what one wills, within apparent limits, is vital to the expression of man's will. But the determinist may stop here and affirm, as Locke at times does, that this is the exclusive realm and the precise nature of freedom; "where either of them (the power to do or forbear any particular action) is not in the power of the agent to be produced by him according to his volition, there he is not at liberty." But, when he is able to perform that which his will decrees, he is free. This might be called effective freedom; but freedom is not essentially this; and effective though this may be, apart from freedom in its essential nature, it is not freedom at

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72. 8; parentheses inserted by the writer of this dissertation; cf. 9, 10, 15, 16, 21, 27.

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all, but the mere physical or mental activity of an automaton. For all practical purposes this effective power to execute one's will is of inestimable importance, but it is an appendage or instrument of freedom rather than its essence. For freedom is inherent not in mechanisms or automats<sup>73</sup>ons, but in spiritual agents or persons.

#### 5. How freedom is to be conceived.

What remains now is the most difficult task with which one is confronted when he undertakes to deal with the question of freedomism versus determinism. The terms determinism and freedom have been defined; it has been argued that the principle of causality cannot be held universally and that freedom is indispensable to an understanding of the self; it has been suggested that freedom manifests itself in thinking and in choosing and is related to a man's power to perform that which he freely wills. It remains now to indicate just how the freedom of the self is to be conceived and described.

##### a. It may defy portrayal.

In attempting such a task, one recalls the wide difference of opinion on the subject; one remembers that the idea was so difficult that Hobbes called it absurd and Locke assumed that, because of its difficulty, freedom could not

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73. Cf. Palmer, PF, 192-193, where this view is expressed in almost the same way.





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 exist. One, therefore, listens attentively to the words of Bowne when he summarizes the matter by saying that, on the one hand, freedom is altogether necessary and, on the other, wholly defies analysis or construction. 75

b. What the theory is not.

Now even if this does turn out to be the necessary conclusion, it is not unprofitable, in the closing section of a discussion preliminary to a consideration of Locke's views of power, to try to indicate the nature of freedom suggested by the view expounded here. Most certainly it is not Hobbes's view; its thoroughgoing, selfish, hedonistic determinism leaves too much out of account--action to one's own detriment, self-sacrifice, altruism. As clearly, it is not Locke's, as emphasized thus far; the freedom to perform scarcely touches the problem of freedom at all. Nor can it be the soft deterministic views of Hume and Mill; their faith in the idea of necessity from a closed past--though it include character as well as circumstance--preserves no freedom unless character is interpreted as having future possibilities; otherwise, it reduces to hard determinism in which at birth the whole history of a self might be predicted if full knowledge of that self were then at hand. 76  
 A tightly closed past, however described, wholly

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74. 73.

75. Bowne, Per; 210.

76. Fraser, LE, I, 372, n.; cf. Palmer, PF, 83, 185, 107; Hudson, PLBH, 5.





excludes freedom. Neither is it the view of Immanuel Kant in which action according to reason is the essence of freedom; but this view that man is free only when he thinks and acts rationally is another kind of determinism, rightly called, by Palmer, idealistic determinism. It is an advance on determinisms in general, but it is not the equivalent of real spiritual freedom. Similarly, though appealing in many respects, George Herbert Palmer's conception of freedom is scarcely adequate; for it, too, ultimately roots freedom in necessary loyalty to reason, softening it by adding, over Kant and Hegel, only that men can forsake freedom by refusing to be rational, but at the same time erroneously affirming that they thereby yield up their nature as persons.

c. What the theory is.

(1) In general.

Now personality is personality even though it be irrational; a person is a self capable of reason and ideal values whether or not it employs it or pursues them. Likewise, in the broadest though ethically insignificant sense, freedom is, potentially, in every normal man and is there, actually (whether he generally employs reason or not), ever after he becomes aware that, by using reason, he can deflect himself from the pathway through which his past history alone would drive him. In other words one can freely choose

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to surrender to basic impulses and refrain from taking the pains to think about them; further still, after one has reflected on various alternative actions one may remain a free person--though immoral, and may deliberately choose (contrary to Palmer) that which is judged less than the best and work against reason rather than with it. In short, freedom exists potentially in all normal men, and actually<sup>78</sup> in them after they are aware of their power to think whether they freely choose to employ it or not and whether after they use it, they heed its decrees or freely select<sup>79</sup> what reason disapproves. Reason is indispensable to the noble employment of freedom, but plain freedom is a reality in men whether they heed the voice of reason or willfully stop their ears!

## (2) Kindred theories.

The theory of freedom expounded here is closer to such<sup>80</sup> views as those of Hudson or Spaulding, though even these<sup>81</sup> are not wholly satisfactory. Hudson's, like Kant's theory of a transcendental self, seeks to place the essential self<sup>82</sup> in an isolated or supertemporal world; his aim is right (the self must somehow be its own master not rigidly determined in its future either by its past or by a present rigidly

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78. Cf. Hocking, SBF, 150-151.

79. Cf. Brightman, Art.(1940), 496.

80. PLBH, 40, 43.

81. KpV, A10-12; KrV, A537-538, MM, 86; cf. Calkins, PP, 257.

82. Cf. Bridgman, Art.(1940), 534.

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76. Cf. Hocking, *ibid.*, 120-121.  
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determined by its past), but this solution is inadequate in that it creates the problem of the connection between this isolated self and the world of experience.<sup>83</sup> Spaulding's theory<sup>84</sup> that the mind, though closely connected with the causal order, operates according to a law of reason which makes it essentially independent of the causal law, is more suggestive of the truth; but the difficulty here is to know how the two laws are related (but this may prove to be the insurmountable difficulty for all theories, so obsessed our minds are with the faith that not even a self acts without prior and necessary causes)!

(3) This theory analyzed in detail.

What, then, is the theory proposed here? It is this. A self may freely choose one course rather than another; it may shape its course contrary to complete, natural necessitation from its historic past. In that choice, though the possibilities are furnished by the past and by environment, the ideal one operates under (which is more than the total of his past experience as such), the motivation which prompts him to pursue that ideal, and the specific decision made under that ideal, are in a decisive measure free from complete compulsion and determination until the decision itself is made.

83. Cf. Schneider, Art.(1940), 657; Hocking, SBF, 157.

84. Spaulding, WAI, 68-69.

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84. Of. Scholastic, and (1940), 227; Spinoza, 197.

84. Spinoza, 197, 227-228.



(a) How prediction is impossible and freedom conceivable.

How it is possible that a self, even in a small but decisive respect, may be an independent or first or creative cause is difficult to perceive, especially in the light of this theory's acknowledgment that the self and its choices, though not determined completely by the past, are possible only because of the wealth of possibilities and isolated data presented by the past. Perhaps, at last, it must be left in the realm of mystery. Yet a theory will first be suggested. Though this theory is not intended to demonstrate the form of a free decision on more complicated moral and spiritual levels, it is intended to suggest something of how such independence might express itself and how it might be conceived. Let it be presented in an illustration.

Under the immediate grand motive of proving to you that, somehow, any one of various possibilities growing out of my past and present may be equally chosen or realized, I call up for consideration ten ideals, represented by ten balls on a table. You, with full knowledge of my past and present self and circumstances, conclude that my choice must be number eight. You even tell me of your conclusion,

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85. Bowne, Per, 210; cf. Palmer, PF, chapter IX, especially 180-181, where he cites the mysteries his theory involves; note, particularly, Porter, Art, (1874), 418, where he paraphrases Sir William Hamilton as follows: This "is true of our belief in God and Free-Will. We cannot conceive of an uncaused or self-existent Being, but we can believe that such a Being exists. Similarly, we cannot conceive of a free act, i.e., an absolute commencement, but we are compelled to believe it."



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and then add this, my new knowledge, to the data considered in predicting my action. Knowing my explicit present purpose and all other things about me, including the fact that I choose to select one of the ideals by chance, by haphazard, all you can predict with absolute certainty is that I will not choose number eight. Or, if I close my eyes and chose blindly, your full knowledge cannot predict even that. Any one of the other nine might equally be chosen. The information necessary to the prediction (which then is but after-description) of my choice is non-existent and unavailable until my will actually chooses. What is necessary to an exhaustive explanation of the act (and what makes prediction impossible) is the act itself.

In some such sense as this, the self is uniquely free. In some such difficult sense (far more difficult when raised to a moral and spiritual level in which preferences and purposes in large measure grow out of the past yet do not completely bind the future in iron shackles), in some such difficult sense it is that, in the life of a self as in the development of thought "the form of what emerges controls the course of its own emergence."<sup>86</sup> In some such way as this, decisions "are altogether peculiar psychic facts. Self-luminous and self-justifying at the living moment at which they occur."<sup>87</sup> In some such manner as this it is "that

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86. Blanshard, NT, I, 482-483.

87. James, WB, 158.





any given act of choice is not unequivocally determined by the immediately preceding situation, but that the person himself determines his choice by a spontaneous selective act.....Its causation is internal to the act and purely<sup>88</sup> personal, not impersonal or external to it." It is something like this of which Bowne was thinking when he said: "By definition a free act is an absolute beginning, and as such is not represented by anything before its occurrence. We trace it to a specific volition, and beyond that it has<sup>89</sup> neither existence nor representation." It is something like this to which Spaulding referred when he wrote: "The real scheme of things is, I maintain, one that involves<sup>90</sup> every now and then a break with the past." And it is to preserve what this theory suggests the necessity of preserving that Palmer writes:

If any present desire and purpose are altogether controlled by those which preceded, the inner life is as inevitable as the outer and the operations of my character no less fated than those of planetary motion.<sup>91</sup>

Now this freedom of indifference or chance, illustrated here, is not, as such, much to be coveted; but it is important as suggesting the inadequacy of this most challenging theory that men's actions are so rigidly determined,

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88. Brightman, ML, 277; italics by the writer of this dissertation

89. The; 189; italics by the writer of this dissertation. Quoted by Hildebrand, BSSF, 103; cf. BSSF, 265.

90. WAI, 61.

91. PF, 185.



any given act of choice is not unambiguously determined by the immediately preceding situation, but that the person himself determines his choice by a spontaneous selective act. . . . The causation is internal to the act and purely personal, not impersonal or external to it." It is something like this of which Bowne was thinking when he said: "By definition a free act is an absolute beginning, and as such is not represented by anything before its occurrence. We trace it to a specific volition, and beyond that it has neither existence nor representation." It is something like this to which Spengler referred when he wrote: "The real scheme of things is, I maintain, one that involves every now and then a break with the past." And it is to preserve what this theory suggests the necessity of preserving that Palmer writes:

If any present desire and purpose are altogether controlled by those which preceded, the human life is as inevitable as the ocean and the operations of my character no less fixed than those of planetary motion.<sup>81</sup>

Now this freedom of indifference or chance, if treated here, is not as much, much to be covered; but it is important as suggesting the indeterminacy of this most cherished theory that men's actions are so rigidly determined.

81. Brightman, M. W.; *Essays by the writer of this dissertation*.  
 82. *Ibid.*; 189; *Essays by the writer of this dissertation*.  
 83. Quoted by Brightman, M. W.; *op. cit.* 189, 190.  
 84. *Ibid.*, 191.  
 85. *Ibid.*, 192.



that, with full knowledge of past and present (present preceding the imminent act of will which is not present or existent except as it comes to exist in the future and in itself supplies new data, being both the thing explained and the explanation), one might perfectly predict the future. And that is all that it is intended to clarify; to this, however, is appended the suggestion that, if the past and present (preceding the act of will itself) cannot account completely for all acts--such as acts of chance--they may no better be able to account completely for (and thus show them to be necessitated) other moral and spiritual decisions of the will,<sup>92</sup> thus making possible that condition which reason and morality require, namely, that a person's character be "his own" and not merely "the product of a process."<sup>93</sup> It also illumines further the fact that, for a self, the past is freighted with possibilities from which it may freely choose--in conformity with a plan or purpose or ideal freely formed, or in opposition to it--rather than be bound by a rigid chain of necessity. And it warrants the conclusion that, whereas before the event, absolute prediction is theoretically impossible, after the event, complete explanation is theoretically conceivable.

(b) The nature of this free self.

That some such element of the novel or creative or

92. Cf. Palmer, PF, 83.

93. Hudson, PLBH, 5.



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(b) The nature of this free self.

That some such element of the novel or creative or



formative and unnecessitated enters into a self's free choice appears probable. But what is the nature of the self which makes this possible, this partial independence from necessity? Possibly the fact is that the self or agent is not a conjunction of separate powers but is rather a complex unity which simultaneously expresses itself in several ways--in thinking, willing and feeling. It is consciousness which recognizes itself as belonging together as a whole and which knows itself as thinking, willing and feeling all at once. But these are not separable powers or faculties; they are abstracted only for thought; they exist as one conscious unity.

The self's freedom may be constituted, however mysterious it precisely is, by the whole, whose very nature is the power, as a whole, to be more than, and independent of the parts, independent of the chain of natural feeling and impulse and desire, and of necessary obedience, too, to the dictates of reason, even though, at the same time, it is essentially related to them, is, in fact, constituted by them. This self is not cut off from necessity; nor is it wholly enslaved by it. It is not enslaved by reason; nor is it unable to utilize it. While, on the one hand, there can be neither feeling nor willing without consciousness or a minimum of "thinking," there can, on the other hand, be no directed thinking which is rigorously subordinated to the ideal of logic unless the will--guided by at



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least a minimum of thinking--directs the self to this most rigorous thinking. So in a sense, thought is dependent on will, while neither will nor feeling can exist where there is not at least a minimum of thought. The empirical problem, then, is to determine whether feeling, which is dependent on conscious thought, determines the will which cannot exist apart from a minimum of thinking or consciousness or whether thinking, which is impossible on the plane of reason unless the will directs it, determines the will, or whether and how the self, as a whole, somehow embodies, yet transcends both. Here is the empirical paradox that defies analysis; here, in the mystery of the relation of thinking, willing, and feeling, three types of experience in one, may be enfolded the secret of the nature of freedom. Perhaps it roots, somehow, in the nature of the whole mind or whole spirit as compared with any of its abstracted parts. There may be a natural necessity and there is a logical necessity as well as a world of spirit as opposed to nature; but how these proceed in their mingled activities along the course that leads to thought, decision, and action, can anyone surely say? Yet the fact that two worlds exist and function in interrelations is, itself, enough to make a clear and persuasive idea of a thoroughgoing necessity exceedingly difficult to conceive; enough to urge

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94. Cf. Whitehead, AI, 59, where he expounds a similar view.

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the insight that the self, as a whole, is a mysterious and free master of processes rather than a wholly necessitated process itself.

(c) Necessity, its infinite regress, and God.

If these attempts to show how freedom, which defies prediction, is possible and how the self is constituted so as to make itself, as a whole, significantly, though, partially, independent of a process or processes that affect it or go on in it, if these attempts fail in either clarity or persuasiveness or both (as they well might because, on the plane of empirical analysis, the problem appears ultimately insoluble, the mystery impenetrable), it must be pointed out that, though on a limited segment of the empirical plane the principle of necessity is clear and compelling, when the plane is extended to the limits which thought demands, or when the argument is placed (where it must finally be placed) on the metaphysical plane, the mystery of necessity becomes equally baffling, and has the additional disadvantage of solving less problems than does the theory of freedom. Let these difficulties be considered specifically.

1. The difficulty with necessity is that it is a self-contradictory principle. Its basic thesis is, every effect has a necessary cause; nothing can begin which is uncaused. As a consequence, the embarrassing truth becomes clear that the concept cannot be thought, since it disintegrates in an

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infinite regress. Now if, as one might, the determinist believes in God and says: the eternal God, who needed no beginning, began the necessary series of the universe, then he is grounding his principle, but he is grounding it on a principle which clearly discounts the universality and the primacy of necessity. Hobbes, for example, compromises the universality of necessity, though he clings to necessity, when he says: Nothing can "begin without a cause.....

unless.....it was eternal." In this argument, the determinist is asserting, first, that there is an unnecessitated cause, an eternal God, and, in the second place, that the unnecessitated cause, the eternal creative spirit, is the superior cause, without which necessity could not exist at all.

So necessity, as sole explanation, is outlawed because its infinite regress is unthinkable and (if its supporter resorts to God) because it becomes purely relative and subordinated to spirit.

ii. Now freedom is likewise an evasive concept, especially on the basis of analysis of the self; but it has the advantage on the metaphysical plane, on the basis of the argument from God, of being more readily conceivable and intelligible. For on this view, it may be argued that God, who orders the universe by a principle of necessity, also

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95. Cf. Fraser, LE, I, 367, n.

96. LN, 276.

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orders the existence of persons and, creating them in his own image, creates them as free, creative, spirits, in essence, in fundamental reality, like himself. They, like him, recognize necessity in certain realms of the universe, but they, like him, know themselves as spirit, in basic nature, in the life of their selves as spirits, to be independent of the unspiritual, natural, principle of necessity. Here, one is brought back again to the earlier thesis of this paper, namely, that necessity is only relatively true. And one is reminded, too, that not only is necessity ordered by God, but it is recognized by human spirits as in another sense, given to nature by themselves, by their own minds.

It is important to note that the theory expounded here sharply contradicts the views asserted by Hudson in his<sup>97</sup> discussion of Locke. Hudson insists that spiritual freedom is possible only for persons who are eternal, that persons created by God could not be free. Now, for one thing, it is no more difficult to conceive of God creating free spirits than to conceive of him creating spirits at all; it is not rash to presume that he could create things equal in wonder to himself, a free spirit. Whereas he is free as eternal and uncreated, man might well be free as created in God's own image by him who possessed the power to ordain it so. Further than this, if Hudson thinks he has solved the problem

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97. PLBH, 40-42.

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of freedom by presupposing eternal, uncreated persons, he should see, too, that he has created several tremendous problems which may be even greater than the one he subtly solves. How amazing it is that persons, living eternally, should not have the slightest consciousness or memory of it; how discouraging too, to intellectual and moral effort, and how disastrous for moral experience that persons should have consciously carried to this life nothing that they learned through a whole eternal life and should have not the slightest sense of personal responsibility for anything they did before. Where and in what form did they pass their previous existence? Why, if men are eternal spirits, do they not have an eternal vision and insight about reality? Why, if men are, like God, eternal, are they so utterly ignorant of the eternal nature of things, so limited in understanding as to be almost completely ignorant as compared with what God must know. Surely existence is an unprofitable venture if, after the labor of eternity, persons (now human) have attained to no more than this. It may be unsatisfactory to some to ground persons in the creative work of God, but how much more arbitrary--and unprofitable--it is to affirm free persons on the ground of their eternal, uncreated, existence, when there is no experience whatsoever which supports such a claim and when it creates more problems than it solves.

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(d) Summary.

This, then, is the view of freedom argued here. Spirit is real; nature and necessity are subordinated to it and ordered by it. Spirit is, in measure, free, as opposed to nature which is necessitated; spirit is free as eternally existing in God and, mysteriously created in man, in God's own image, by God himself.

As spirit, man is moved by processes and desires that arise from nature and is challenged by spiritual realities that arise from one's own spiritual nature and from the spiritual realm in and beyond nature, which includes God's purposes, the well-being of other persons, the challenge of ideals objectively real and authoritative. All these are voiced by and followed not on the call of desire but on the distinctly different and essentially spiritual imperative of the ought. Man is a free spirit who may yield to countless desires foisted on him naturally, or may assert his will to follow in the way he believes he ought to go.

Reason is the ideal guide employed both by desire and by ought; reason, however weak in certain persons its light may be, is able to reveal to all normal men that they are free. And in the light of this knowledge, they may act freely, in response to the ought urged by the ideal world or the desire urged by the realm of nature. Freedom is nobly used, however, when the spirit pursues the line of obligation and subordinates the urging of desire; though





often, of course, the two may go hand in hand. Even lowly persons who accept traditions or intuitions as guides to what they ought to do are free in that they, too, know the difference between ought and mere desire, and, according to their light (for which alone they are morally responsible), freely choose between them. Man is free because he is spirit and superior to nature which may be necessitated; as spirit, he may freely surrender to reason or ignore it, do what he ought to do or what he desires to do, has moral responsibility, is a person, not a process.

As Puvis de Chavannes's famous painting of Plato, in the Boston Public Library, symbolizes, man is, in Plato's phrase, "une plante du ciel non de la terre"; man is spirit, not matter, and it is this that makes him free.

However inadequate or unilluminating this or any exposition of the nature of freedom may be, its reality must nevertheless be affirmed because of its essential function in the quest for truth, for morality, for religion, for man's control of his world. Even if it is too difficult a  
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concept to be clearly described it is logical, inescapable and indispensable. One may well have to be content with the  
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conclusion of Bowne:

Suppose there were a free person with experience of life's meanings and insight into its values and obligations. There is nothing in his freedom

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98. Cf. Locke, 73; Fraser, LE, I, 368, n; Brightman, Art.(1940), 504.

99. Per; 209-210; cf. Hocking, SBF, 157; Fraser, LE, I, 372, n.







to hinder his acting rationally or to excuse him for acting irrationally; but how he will act does not find its sufficient ground in the "antecedent phenomena" alone, but also in the mystery of self-determination. And this is something which cannot be mechanically analyzed or deduced as a necessary resultant--it can only be experienced. The attempt to analyze it contradicts it. The attempt to construct it denies it. It can only be recognized as the central factor of personality, the condition of responsibility, and the basis of the moral life. Criticism cannot hope to construe it; it can only point it out as a fact, and show that the objections to it rest only on an imperfect understanding of thought itself.

Even if it cannot be described, freedom must be affirmed.

#### B. Locke's Theories of Personal Freedom.

In the light of this preliminary discussion of freedom, the views of this British empiricist, who felt that "true notions concerning the nature and extent of liberty are of so great importance"<sup>100</sup> and whose own views on the subject have had so wide an influence, may now be more clearly expounded and criticized.

It must be remarked at the outset that, in this matter as in things generally, Locke was in utter earnestness; Locke was deeply concerned about attaining a sound interpretation of the nature of human freedom. So earnest he was about this particular problem that in subsequent editions (especially the second in which he made extensive additions and introduced for the first time his confused considerations about<sup>101</sup> deliberation), he freely corrected his former opinions,

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100. 74.

101. Cf. Fraser, LE, I, 329, n.2.







boldly confessing himself to be "a lover of truth, and not  
<sup>102</sup>  
 a worshipper of my own doctrines."

Despite all his earnestness and effort, however, his  
 success in this undertaking was none too great, a fact which  
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One other introductory remark need be made, namely, this,  
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 and the experience of deliberation), their relations, and  
 Locke's specific thesis that one must will what he considers  
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 views will be expounded and criticized in order; then Locke's  
 theory as a whole will be evaluated.

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102. 74; in a letter to the Bishop of Worcester he writes again:  
 "My aim (was) purely to follow truth as far as I could  
 discover it...." Cf. Locke, LBW, (3.96), 3.

103. Hudson, PLBH, 24.

104. Fraser, LE, I, 380.

105. Ibid., 329, n.2.



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104. Fraser, *LA*, I, 380.  
105. *Ibid.*, 382, n.2.



1. Freedom as power to perform what is willed.

a. Exposition.

Locke begins and closes his exposition with consideration of the thesis which is suggested by the very title of his chapter on power, namely, that freedom consists in the power to perform what a man wills. If a man wills to lift his hand, or to refrain from lifting it, the question is whether he has the physical power to perform what he wills. Freedom "is not an idea belonging to volition, or preferring; but to the person having the power of doing or forbearing to do according as the mind shall choose or direct."<sup>106</sup> The quite simple conception of freedom here suggested, freedom from physical, mental, or external hindrance to one's actual execution of what is willed is expressed again thus:

So far as a man has power to think or not to think, to move or not to move, according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a man free. Wherever any performance or forbearance are not equally in a man's power; wherever doing or not doing will not equally follow upon the preference of his mind directing it, there he is not free....<sup>107</sup>

So far as any one can....make it to exist or not exist, so far he is free.<sup>108</sup>

Freedom (is) our being able to act or not to act, according as we shall choose or will.<sup>109</sup>

Were it not that Locke flatly contradicts himself in his subsequent discussion of liberty as consisting in the

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106. 10; cf. 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 27, 41, 57, 73.

107. 8.

108. 21.

109. 27.







power to deliberate, one would have to conclude that Locke meant this conception of freedom as power to perform to be the alpha and omega of his view. As may already have been suggested, Locke asserts this view not only at the beginning and at the end of his exposition, but he boldly states that freedom consists in this "indifferency" of "the operative powers of the man" and not "in any other"; "as far as this indifferency reaches, a man is free, and no further."<sup>110</sup> "Our idea of liberty reaches as far as that power and no farther."<sup>111</sup> Where a man lacks this power to perform, "there he is not at liberty,"<sup>112</sup> "liberty consisting in a power to act or to forbear acting, and in that only."<sup>113</sup> As though to emphasize the exclusive and complete adequacy of this plain view of freedom, he asks: "How can we think any one freer than to have the power to do what he will?"<sup>114</sup>

Though no further exposition is required to clarify Locke's meaning, it may, nevertheless, be profitable to point out that it is to be understood as the view maintained by Hobbes:

If a man should talk to me of.....a free subject; a free will; or any free, but free from being hindered by opposition, I should not say he were in error, but that his words were without meaning, that is to say, absurd.<sup>115</sup>

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113. 24.

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115. Lev., 32-33; cf. LN, 247.

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116. 75.

117. 10.

118. 8.

119. 24.

120. 21.

121. 100. 33-35; cf. 12, 207.



This is the view which one of Locke's most approved contemporaries attributes to Locke; it is Locke's correspondent, Anthony Collins, who writes that liberty is

le pouvoir qu'a l'Homme de faire ce qu'il veut, ou ce qu'il lui plaît....C'est l'idée qu'en ont eue Aristote, Cicéron, M. Locke, et plusieurs autres Philosophes anciens et modernes.116

b. Criticism.

In the light of what has already been said of such a  
117  
view of freedom, no extended criticism is required here.

Let just four comments be made.

(1) Freedom, conceived as the power to execute what one wills, does not touch the real problem of freedom at all, namely, whether the spirit of man is free, and, if so, in what sense it is free. When Locke asserts that freedom consists in this power to perform, he dogmatically insists that it can consist in nothing else; though later he speaks of deliberation, right here, by clear implication, he wholly excludes any freedom of man's spirit. In so doing, Locke completely side-steps the only difficult and significant question of freedom. Not only does he erroneously imply that morality consists in success or failure in one's performing one's will (while this is not essentially a matter of morality at all), but, on this theory of freedom, he excludes the very heart of morality--the free power of the spirit to

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116. Collins, Art.(1717), 257.

117. Cf. I, D, 3.





choose what it will pursue. For it is in this power to choose for oneself, and the accompanying responsibility for one's choices (whether one succeeds or fails in executing them) that morality consists.

When, therefore, Locke asks: "How can we think any one freer, than to have the power to do what he wills?" <sup>118</sup> one must answer that one is freer, is, in fact, truly free, only when he possesses the power to select freely what he wills rather than having his will necessitated by something other than his own free spirit. As Kant might say, real freedom and morality consist not so much in the power of one's will as in one's spiritual capacity for determining whether his will will be good or evil. Were this not true, a man who had lost his arms in battle would be immoral (though he yearned with all his heart to save a child who was being swept by a raging current toward a waterfall) simply because it was outside his power to save her. Were this not true, Martin Niemöller, whose moral grandeur has stirred the world, would be a moral failure because he was impotent to defeat Hitler. If the power to perform is the nature of man's freedom, his spirit is wholly necessitated; his subjective life is a process; his experience of free choice is an illusion; and the whole structure of real morality is destroyed. In affirming this as the only freedom man has, then, Locke not only implies the negation of personality and morality, but denies the reality of spiritual freedom.



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(2) But worse than that, after affirming this as the  
<sup>119</sup>  
 only freedom of man, Locke, in another place, insists that  
 man's liberty consists in something else, namely, the power  
 of deliberation. Throughout his discourse, Locke seems  
 neither to attempt to get nor to succeed in getting the two  
 distinct views coherently related. They stand, rather, as  
 two independent, disconnected answers to one question.

(3) Related to this view of freedom is Locke's untrue  
 observation to the effect that "the will....cannot at any  
 time be moved towards what is judged at that time unattain-  
<sup>120</sup>  
 able." This is quite consistent with Locke's inadequate  
 understanding of ideals. But it is wholly out of harmony  
 with the truth about ideals. They are by definition and in  
 fact always beyond, always out of reach. As Browning says  
 so truly, "a man's reach must exceed his grasp," a man's  
 ideal will must ever stretch out toward goals that he knows  
 he will never wholly realize, toward goals which grow in  
 grandeur and in unattainableness even as one moves toward  
 them. Not only, then, can one, but it is the nature of life  
 that one does, will that which is admittedly unattainable.

(4) Yet it is clear beyond any doubt that, while the  
 power to perform is not a significant account of freedom, it  
 is a most important factor in human experience. However es-  
 sential freedom of the spirit is, so long as persons are

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119. 48.

120. 41.





associated with phsyical bodies, so long spiritual freedom will, no matter how moral, be ineffective in altering the world, unless men do possess this power to perform what they freely will. But in a discussion of freedom it is essential to see that the important practical power to perform what is willed does not touch the heart of the problem of the freedom of a person.

## 2. Determination by uneasiness or desire.

### a. Exposition.

Having expounded this theory of freedom as power to perform what one wills, and even though, at the close of his chapter, he still affirms it together with a distinctly different conception of freedom, Locke sees clearly that a more challenging consideration remains, namely, whether, in addition to overt acts, volitions themselves are free. This question he answers at first without equivocation in the negative. Volitions are naturally determined by a person's present, prevailing, uneasiness; and usually the prevailing one is the strongest.

Locke's view of voluntary actions is characterized by ambiguity, evasiveness, and circumlocution. There is, therefore, danger in attempting adequately and fairly to interpret his position. Despite the unclarity of Locke's exposition and with clear awareness of much that is said which would, at least on the surface, seem to point to another tendency toward real freedom (to be discussed in the next section of





this paper), the thesis to be defended here is that Locke, in his chapter on power, essentially and inescapably supports the theory of natural, necessary, determination of volitions by natural uneasiness or desire of body or mind.<sup>121</sup>

Quite explicitly he asks: "What moves the mind in every particular instance....?" And he answers: "The motive to change is always uneasiness: nothing setting us upon the change of state, or upon any new action but some uneasiness."<sup>122</sup> "This uneasiness we may call, as it is, desire...."<sup>123</sup> "That which immediately determines the will....is the uneasiness of desire."<sup>124</sup> It is clear from this and what follows that (a) volitions are naturally determined by the strongest uneasiness<sup>125</sup> (though modification of this is later attempted),<sup>126</sup> that (b) uneasiness is most accurately defined (despite Locke's vacillations) as desire, and that (c) desire is essentially natural (even though it is registered in minds, ranges in varied persons from lust to the pleasures of the intellect, and later is affirmed by Locke to be subject to a kind of criticism). Locke's words, but even more compellingly the necessary implications of his sometimes equivocating exposition, warrant this interpretation--that he holds the activities of men to be necessitated by inescapable, natural, desire

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121. 29, 31, 33, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 44, 48.

122. 29.

123. 31.

124. 33.

125. 36.

126. 31.

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121. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.



for one's own pleasure or happiness.

(1) Volitions are naturally necessitated, determined by (usually the strongest) uneasiness. How explicitly Locke affirms it: "The present uneasiness that we are under does <sup>127</sup> naturally determine the will." Uneasiness "determines the <sup>128</sup> will, successively, in that train of voluntary actions."

"Uneasiness" determines the will "because that alone is present and it is against the nature of things, that what is absent <sup>129</sup> should operate where it is not." It is not unwarranted to conclude that, though Locke equivocates a bit, he, as readily as Hobbes, might have expressed it so: "Whatever is produced is necessarily....and therefore also voluntary actions are <sup>130</sup> necessitated." "There is no such thing as freedom from <sup>131</sup> necessity."

(2) When Locke writes of uneasiness what he means basically, and, in this sense, exclusively, is desire, desire for one's own happiness, the ever-present inescapable object and determiner of all one's activity. Locke's must be designated as psychological hedonism. In one place at least, Locke writes of "some present uneasiness, which is, or at least <sup>132</sup> is always accompanied with that of desire." Again he speaks of uneasiness in terms of "aversion, fear, anger, envy, shame"

127. 36.

128. 41.

129. 37.

130. Hobbes, LN, 275.

131. Ibid., 278.

132. 73.

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127. 36.  
128. 41.  
129. 37.  
130. Hobbes, II, 210.  
131. Ibid., 216.  
132. 38.



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the will."<sup>133</sup> But almost exclusively he speaks of uneasiness  
and desire as equivalent; and, what is of greatest importance,  
he apparently never clearly states that the sense of  
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(3) Not only is volition naturally necessitated by the  
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133. 40.

134. 33; cf. 31.

135. 53.

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133. 40.  
134. 33: of. 31.  
135. 33.



man (as will be argued subsequently) a part of the natural order, and deprives him entirely of a partially independent spiritual nature. It will be readily acknowledged that, despite his theory, Locke contradicts it in practice, and occasionally in theory contradicts the theory itself;<sup>136</sup> but it must be maintained that his discussion of the self and its freedom is most fairly interpreted as asserting that all men's actions are determined by uneasiness, that that uneasiness is essentially equivalent to desire, and that that desire is naturally given; in short, Locke often explicitly affirms in detail and necessarily implies in the large the view that the whole activity of the self is mechanistically determined by natural desire for one's own happiness.

Let several supporting observations be made. At a later place in his discussion,<sup>137</sup> Locke affirms that men may learn to desire real goods; this suggests that he meant, till then, to affirm that desires usually are just naturally present. (It will later be inferred that Locke's conception of good makes his discussion of learning to desire a circular and tautological discussion; for the good is, by definition, that which is apt to give me pleasure.) Again, Locke explicitly affirms the natural character of desire when he says that "the removing of pain, as long as we have any left (is) the first and necessary step towards happiness."<sup>138</sup> To be even

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136. Gov., II, 58.

137. 71.

138. 36.

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This view which, when reduced to a consistent position, is scarcely distinguishable from Hobbes's hedonistic determinism is so interpreted by Palmer and so understood by

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139. 31.

140. 43.

141. PF, 193.

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Naturalism, or the universal applicability of physical causation, as an adequate account of the voluntary determinations of spiritual agents, equally with events in the material world, notwithstanding his vacillations, is Locke's implied principle.

That Locke is, in his theory of power or the self, a mechanist, or naturalistic determinist, is the thesis asserted here--even in the light of the numerous, impressive efforts of Locke to escape such mechanism and its implications. After criticism of the view just expounded, these efforts will be considered under Locke's general notion of deliberation.

#### b. Criticism.

Several extended criticisms of Locke's naturalistic determinism are now justified.

##### (1) It minimizes man's rational and spiritual nature.

Locke's theory adequately explains the largest area of man's activity; it accurately describes what Christianity has called the natural man, the man as he lives when he lives by instinct or habit responding impulsively to the ceaseless uneasinesses with which nature besets him. But the theory inadequately comprehends the smaller, distinctive, qualitative character of man's activity; it inaccurately describes the whole man because it does not include his spiritual nature. Man is generally driven by natural

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uneasiness, but in his highest and heroic moments, he moves on a higher plane by means of his freedom to think and his freedom to follow what reason, not desire, decrees. For it is a fact of man's spiritual nature that he can, by taking thought, direct himself along courses which he would not have taken if he had surrendered to natural, spontaneous uneasiness. In the light of reason (to which he can freely turn usually regardless of the "most pressing" uneasiness), one can alter somewhat or completely change one's course as dictated by desire, one unquestionably experiences the feeling of rejecting the easiest, or "most pressing," motivation and of following one that requires the greatest exertion of will; here, then, uneasiness of desire does not determine; rather the uneasiness of desire and all its driving power are overcome by the relentless will to do what ought to be done. Once upon a time an adolescent boy who had a potent appetite for chocolates gave up eating chocolates for several years, youthfully believing he could thus perfect himself for athletic competition; but even after that reason for abstaining had vanished, he resisted the temptation (though the uneasiness for candy was literally almost unbearable) simply because the experience strengthened his will and proved to him repeatedly that he could do it. Trivial though this illustration is, it makes clear the truth that an idea or an ideal can be rigidly adhered to, not as a consequence of, but in rigorous opposition to the uneasiness of



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desire. Again, if only to prove that it can be done, one can choose any one of six unappealing alternatives and completely reject the one which appeals to him most strongly. Uneasiness accounts for much; but it does not account for everything, for spiritual freedom alone exhausts man's nature.

(2) Locke's theory excludes freedom of thought and choice.

Locke's theory of determination by uneasiness excludes freedom of thought and freedom of choice. If it is true that one can reason only when he is necessitated to it by the uneasiness of desire, then a scientist cannot carry on experiments (if he is tired or in a contrary mood) on the strength of a sense of obligation or duty; then his associates have to wait not till the spirit, but till natural uneasiness, moves him. If nature has not so decreed it, one cannot reply intelligibly to a sudden question concerning the sum of twenty-one and seventy-six. If he does not find satisfaction in it, one cannot surrender his thought to the laws of logic and find solutions to presented problems. But most important of all, if even thinking is determined as a nonspiritually initiated process, then all proof, including the proof of Locke's argument, is utterly impossible, all "conclusions" being equally necessitated effects.

Not only is thinking at the mercy of natural uneasiness; so, also, is choosing. Whatever one wills is necessarily willed by the quantitative force of uneasiness; the good as such, unless it is at the same time most strongly desired,

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cannot possibly be willed. Locke, himself, insists on this.

As a result, every man's every act is wholly necessitated by the force of things beyond his control; he is part of a necessitated process and is not a person with the spiritual power of initiating processes. Three consequences follow.

(3) Ought and should lose all meaning.

It is, on Locke's theory, utterly meaningless to say of a man who is about to perform an act or who has just completed one: "He ought to do this or, he should have done that." Whatever was done, whatever will be done, was or is wholly determined by the prevailing uneasiness. Since the prevailing uneasiness had to prevail, it permitted no free choice by the person. That which was done had to be done; and the moral ought, the reproving should have, are altogether empty words.

(4) Moral responsibility and praise and blame dissolve.

Moral responsibility and the ground for praise and blame completely disappear or go on inconsistently. For when actions are absolutely determined by natural uneasiness, no one can be held accountable for them. Responsibility and praise and blame attach intelligibly to actions of men only if those men are free, only if they, not a process, select this rather than that, deliberately choose the good or the bad.

(5) God is responsible for both the good and the evil.

If all men's actions are absolutely determined by the





natural uneasiness of desire, and men are deprived of all responsibility, if they are parts of a process, not persons, then it is the universe which causes all things, or, if there is a God, it is God who is responsible for all men's characters, Christ's and Pilate's, St. Francis's and Hitler's, Nero's and Nightingale's; it is God who is responsible for all men's acts, acts of love, good will, honesty, courage, loyalty, acts of murder, rape, war, lying, choosing, stealing, hatred, blasphemy, laziness, revenge. The works that men do--good and evil--they do not of themselves; God does the works through them; God commits the Brockton murder; God kidnaps and crushes the life from a baby; God is solely responsible for the holocaust of war. The first difficulty of determinism, then, is that it brutalizes God or makes his existence utterly inconceivable; and the second is like unto it, for it makes the universe a madhouse of evil and irony, evil in that the universe necessitates murder, irony in that it makes men regret it.

(6) All distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, vanish.

Because all is determined, all meaning for good and evil, all distinction between right and wrong, dissolve; men no longer are moral beings but are, as it were, trees walking or sheep grazing in the fields.

(7) Locke's view fails to see that desires are often initiated and directed by ideas.

One may almost by force of habit be perplexing himself

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with a theoretical consideration that as yet has yielded, and gives promise of yielding, no solution. He may be greatly unset and deeply distressed because of this baffling situation. Then suddenly the idea will occur: "Don't allow yourself to be distressed by it; simply drop it and forget about it." If he yields to this suggestion of thought, he cancels, wipes out, by thought, a desire that was driving him on and making him uneasy. Nevertheless, he may, if he so chooses, go on pursuing a solution to his problem. The point of the illustration is that he is literally free to follow a process which already is underway, or yield to the leading of an idea which he entertains in his mind; ideas may stimulate desires, or ideas may directly motivate one's will to the performance of an act; so that desires, alone, do not determine the will. One may do the obviously most absurd thing, such as cutting off his finger when he would prefer to keep his finger; one may do the most important thing, such as going out to die for a cause which his best thinking leads him to believe to be just, though his deep desire is to live; ideas may not only determine one's actions but ideas may, as well, initiate desires.

### 3. Deliberation.

#### a. Locke's thesis.

Seeing that his theory as just asserted (the theory that the will is absolutely determined by the strongest or prevailing uneasiness) makes man a nonresponsible part of





nature's processes, Locke next takes up the task of saving man's responsibility. And he seeks to do this by affirming<sup>143</sup> (on second thought and in the second edition of the Essay) that man does possess a power by which, rather than surrendering spontaneously to the strongest uneasiness of desire, he may suspend volition and think about the consequences of his yielding to any present uneasiness--whether or not it does, in fact, contribute to his long-run satisfaction of desire. For example, he may be dominated by the desire to reject spinach because he dislikes it; but since he possesses this power of suspension and deliberation, he suspends the natural drive of his uneasiness toward willing the rejection of spinach; and after consideration, realizing that spinach contributes to physical health which he desires, he eats<sup>144</sup> spinach. Here the important thesis is that the self pos-<sup>145</sup> sesses a power to suspend volition, that, during suspension, competing desires may be criticized, that, in terms of the possibilities of each potential act's increasing my happiness, judgments may be made.

For, the mind having.....a power to suspend the execution and satisfaction of any of its desires; and so all, one after another; is at liberty to consider the objects of them, examine them on all sides, and weigh them with others. In this lies the liberty man has.<sup>146</sup>

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143. Fraser, LE, I, 379.

144. Cf. 57

145. 23, 41, 48, 54, 57.

146. 48.





(Though Locke had already asserted that man's liberty was constituted exclusively by his power to perform what is willed.) "Understanding may be free to examine, and reason unbiased give its judgment." <sup>147</sup> It is in the discussion of this power to deliberate that Locke evinces his awareness of the need for freedom and that he thinks he has discovered and proved the true nature of it. He goes so far in other writings, too, as to imply freedom's reality by objecting to Hobbes and Spinoza for "resolving all, even the thoughts and will of men, into an irresistible, fatal necessity," <sup>148</sup> and by <sup>149</sup> insisting in his Second Treatise of Government that "God having given man an understanding to direct his actions has allowed him a freedom of will and liberty of acting." So here it is clear that Locke believes not only in the freedom of the power to execute what is willed, but even in freedom of will. He appears to want to believe in it even in the Essay; but he hesitates to affirm it without equivocation and, because of his presupposition that all volitions are determined by the uneasiness of desire, he is unwarranted in holding and fails to prove that the self is really free.

#### b. Criticism.

(1) Locke's thesis fails to allow or establish freedom.

That Locke's attempt to escape from mechanism, without

147. 54.

148. Locke, Art.(1693)<sup>1</sup>, 257; unspecifically and inaccurately quoted by Hudson, PLBH, 43; unspecifically but accurately quoted by Fraser, LE, I, xlvii.

149. Gov., II, 58.





repudiating completely (which he never even comes close to doing) the large explicit part and whole underlying current of his thought in his chapter on power, fails, that his view necessarily reduces to naturalistic determinism, in spite of his struggle to save personal responsibility, is clearly attested.

(a) Necessary volitions and freedom to think.

He has forcefully and vigorously grounded his thought in the assertion that men are determined to will that which best satisfies their present uneasiness; volition is always so determined; this, men cannot escape. But in the light of this, Locke goes on to say that, even so, if a man wills wrongly, he is responsible for his error--because he did not stop and think. If Locke really meant, as he seemed to mean, that volitions are always determined by the prevailing uneasiness, then it is clear that whatever a man willed and <sup>150</sup> did had to be willed and done. The prevailing uneasiness, whether it was strongest or not (since Locke admits that occasionally it is not the strongest), absolutely determined his volition; the fact that he acted as he did proves that he was compelled by his uneasiness to move in that direction; so Locke's theory requires. In the following sentence, Locke says it most plainly; here he, at one time, affirms necessity and dresses necessity in such alluring clothes as to make

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150. Cf. Fraser, LE, I, 352, n. 5.



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thinking always present when needed:

Whatever necessity determines to the pursuit of real bliss, the same necessity, with the same force, establishes suspense, deliberation, and scrutiny of each successive desire, whether the satisfaction of it does not interfere with our true happiness, and mislead us from it.<sup>151</sup>

But in saying this, he not only rededicates himself to the necessity of satisfying desire for one's own happiness and to subsequently necessitated volitions, but again undermines any warrant for saying someone "should have thought."<sup>152</sup> For, by his own words, it is not a matter of should or should not, could or could not; it is simply a necessitated matter of did and had to do so. How clearly he says it in another place: "What moves the mind in every particular instance....

<sup>153</sup> is always uneasiness." If one did not think, he did not think because under the existing conditions of uneasiness, he was not free to think; he could do no other than as he did! So, at the outset, Locke's attempt to escape from his basic principle and its implications is frustrated; freedom to think, like freedom to will overt acts, just does not exist. On Locke's theory of necessitation of all volitions by uneasiness, then, if a man does not think, he cannot sensibly be held responsible. For the fact of his failure to think is identical with the fact that the naturally

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151. 53.

152. Cf. 48.

153. 29.



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151. 55.  
152. 56. 48.  
153. 57.



prevailing uneasiness prevented him from thinking. This point Locke fails to consider at all.

One of Locke's views may help to explain this failure, namely, that Locke thought of thinking and willing as two different powers of a substantial self; he may have believed that thinking was something to which the substantial self could turn without reference to the will; he apparently (consider his views on substance) had no idea that the entire self, person, spirit, was one conscious unity. But it must be pointed out, first of all, that this view, whether or not Locke stood by it, is unsound. The self, it appears, is consciousness which recognizes itself as belonging together as a whole. It is a unity of conscious activity, which is characterized by a mysterious minimum complex unity of feeling, willing and thought, abstractly mentionable but actually inseparable. Each continually involves the other; each, at least on a minimal plane, simultaneously functions with the other. Without specific and persistent volition, thinking on any but the minimal level of human consciousness, thinking which is directed and concentrated on any problem, is absolutely impossible. So it must be asserted that, even if Locke believed thinking to be independent of volition, and thus assumed man's power to think independently of volition, his assumption is untenable. And secondly, if Locke made this assumption in his argument for freedom to deliberate, his exposition is to be challenged because he never took the



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pains to acknowledge it as his presupposition, even though, were it allowed as valid, it would be thoroughly indispensable to his argument for man's freedom to think.

The essential thesis here, defended, however, is simply this, that Locke's assertion that man is free to think (though, admittedly, he may engage in thinking if he happens to be necessitated to it), and the responsibility he would thereby place on man, are utterly indefensible on his basic presupposition that all volitions are necessitated by uneasiness, desire for happiness. If a man did not think, it is clear, on Locke's thesis, that he could not; on Locke's thesis it is clear that there is no freedom to think at all.

In clear language, though he misconstrues the real nature of freedom, he, nevertheless, plainly states, near the end of his exposition of power, that such freedom to think as that which real freedom requires is impossible, when he holds that

to place liberty in an indifferency, antecedent to the thought and judgment of the understanding, seems to me to place liberty in a state of darkness, wherein we can neither see nor say anything of it; at least it places it in a subject incapable of it, no agent being allowed capable of liberty, but in consequence of thought and judgment.

(b) Locke does not primarily and unequivocally assert man's spiritual nature.

One other consideration which undermines Locke's assert-

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154. Fraser, LE, I, 364, n. 3.

155. 73.





ing freedom is that he does not unequivocally assert man's spiritual nature. His consciousness is a power of a so-called spiritual substance; this substance is the fundamental reality of a self, of a spiritual being, for, on Locke's theory, without it there would be no agency for the separate powers of thinking and willing. Locke is somewhat evasive in declaring what the real nature of this substance is; it is, in fact, a "je ne sais quoi"; it is that in which the powers of thinking and willing exist; he even speaks of finite spirits (substances) as having place, spatial location; he asserts that material substance may have the power to think. Now in spite of Locke's affirmation that God is immaterial and that, though it cannot be proved, it is "in the highest degree probable, that the thinking substance in us is immaterial," the fact remains that Locke does not unequivocally assert the distinctly, primarily, spiritual (as opposed to material), self-conscious unity and fundamental reality of a man in his nature as a person. He leans in that direction; yet he is not bold to affirm it without qualifications and other intimations.

Ueberweg cites at least two historical consequences of Locke's vacillations in this matter. For one thing, he points out that the materialists of the school of Hobbes

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156. Essay, II, xxvii, 2.

157. Ibid., IV, iii, 6.

158. Locke, LBW, 33; this is cited unspecifically by Fraser, LE, II, 193, n.

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158. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
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162. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
163. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
164. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
165. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
166. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
167. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
168. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
169. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
170. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
171. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
172. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
173. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
174. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
175. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
176. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
177. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
178. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
179. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
180. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
181. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
182. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
183. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
184. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
185. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
186. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
187. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
188. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
189. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
190. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
191. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
192. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
193. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
194. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
195. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
196. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
197. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
198. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
199. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.  
200. Locke, II, xxvii, 2.



were encouraged in their theory during the eighteenth century by the fact that Locke had asserted the possibility that matter might think.<sup>159</sup> For another, Voltaire, Locke's disciple in many ways, was encouraged, by this supposition of Locke, in his belief that there could be no unextended spirit in man.<sup>160</sup> The point of these observations is simply this, that Locke's equivocation about the nature of spiritual substance and his assertion that even matter may possibly think, not only offered support to historical materialists, but left unclear just what his view about the nature of man as a person was. All that can be said with assurance of his view is that it did not unequivocally and primarily assert man's spiritual nature.

For his view of freedom this is of fundamental importance; for if freedom exists at all, it exists only because men, as spiritual beings, are, at least in measure, independent of the material and necessitated realms of the world. If men, themselves, are material things, they are engulfed in the stream of necessity which basically characterizes the natural world; and freedom is swallowed up with them.

As Locke's view of the nature of man stands in the Essay, his efforts to establish any kind of freedom are doomed to defeat in advance; his theory of man's nature is not explicitly adequate to bear the load of freedom. If,

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159. Porter, Art.(1974), 371; cf. Lowell, EFR, 66.

160. Ueberweg, HP, II, 125; cf. Voltaire, LA, 48, DP, II, 23.

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without hesitation, he had affirmed the clear, empirical insight that selves are complex, unified, agents, conscious spirits, and that spirit is the fundamental reality, all else being subordinated to it, he might, with greater confidence, clarity, and cogency, have asserted, and been justified in asserting, a theory of real personal freedom. For the question of freedom can be intelligibly argued only in the light of a clear conception of self-consciousness, the ultimate reality which, in man, is not the product of the unconscious but is, rather, the reproduction of an eternal  
161  
consciousness.

If, in spite of these, his presupposition of naturally determining, given, uneasiness and his materialistic or agnostic view of the self (which does not sufficiently distinguish it from physical nature or matter) he believes in freedom, he believes in a reality which is wholly excluded by and impossible on his own theory. If, in spite of these, he believes in freedom, he should have modified his theory of natural uneasiness as determining each volition, or should

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161. Cf. Locke, Art.(1696)<sup>1</sup>, 19 in which he stresses his point in the Essay (II, xxiii, 4) to the effect that substances are essential to the subsistence of "simple ideas of sensible qualities." In like manner, Locke fears that personal self-consciousness is not the ultimate reality but requires an unknown substance in which it may inhere: "The idea of....thinking is inconsistent with the idea of self-subsistence, and therefore has a necessary connection with a support or subject of inhesion." (Art.(1696)<sup>1</sup>, 33.



without hesitation, he had affirmed the clear, empirical insight that selves are complex, unified, conscious entities, and that spirit is the fundamental reality, all also being subordinated to it, he might, with greater confidence, clearly, and cogently, have asserted, and been justified in asserting, a theory of real personal freedom. For the question of freedom can be intelligibly argued only in the light of a clear conception of self-consciousness, the ultimate reality which, in man, is not the product of the unconscious but is, rather, the reproduction of an eternal consciousness.

It, in spite of these, his presupposition of naturally determining, given, unconscious and his materialistic or agnostic view of the self (which does not sufficiently distinguish it from physical nature or matter) he believes in freedom, he believes in a reality which is wholly excluded by and incompatible on his own theory. It, in spite of these, he believes in freedom, he should have modified his theory of natural unconscious as determining each volition, or should

101. Cf. Locke, *Art. (1692)*, 1, in which he stresses the point in the Essay (II, *Chap. 1*) to the effect that substances are essential to the substance of "simple ideas of sensible qualities." In like manner, Locke fears that personal self-consciousness is not the ultimate reality but regards an unknown substance in which it may inhere: "The idea of... thinking is inconsistent with the idea of self-substance, and therefore has a necessary connection with a support or subject of ideas." (*Art. (1692)*, 23.



have shown how the two, determining uneasiness and free volitions, could stand together (which appears impossible). He should have clearly stated that spirit is absolutely different in kind from matter and operates on a distinctive law of its own. He should have frankly acknowledged necessity to be incorrect or incomplete and have affirmed freedom as a reality even though he had to confess that he could not define it or clearly relate it to his views of the self as a whole. Because he did none of these, because at one point he maintained (and in subsequent revisions did not alter it) that freedom to execute what is willed is the only freedom man has, because he basically affirmed and repeatedly reverted to the thesis that uneasiness of desire absolutely determines each volition (which would have to include consciously directed thinking, since that is a volition), because he allowed the possibility of materialism, or at least agnosticism and unclarity in his view of the self's essential nature, because of these things, it must be argued that Locke's view explicitly is, or necessarily reduces to, naturalistic, mechanistic, determinism. His view, therefore, wholly excludes the possibility of real freedom and it shares with acknowledged determinism the criticisms which have previously been made of it.

(2) Suppose a real power of deliberation.

But suppose, for the sake of argument, that, in spite of his presupposition of a determining, natural, agnostic,

have shown how the two determining consciousness and free will-  
tions, would stand together (which appears impossible). He  
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viously been made of it.

(3) Suppose a real power of deliberation.  
But suppose, for the sake of argument, that, in spite  
of his proposition of a determining, natural, agnostic,



or equivocating view of the self's essence, Locke's power to suspend volition is a free power (admittedly, it could occur as a necessary consequence of an uneasiness which determined a man to suspend further volition; but this would not be freedom and a man could not be charged with responsibility if, in any instance, he failed to suspend and deliberate). Nevertheless, supposing Locke's power to suspend and deliberate were a free power, what kind of freedom--after the volition were freely made to suspend and deliberate-- what kind of freedom would this amount to anyway? An answer will now be given to this question.

(a) Locke's theory of good and evil.

Because of the nature of good and evil in Locke's theory, even if men were free to think, it would be illegitimate for Locke to speak of the "proper" object of desire or to say that someone is responsible for his wrong choice because he "imposed on himself wrong measures of good and evil." For again, in spite of Locke's confusing equivocation, it must be concluded that his theory is that good and evil are purely relative to one's own taste and desire, some desiring intellectual, some desiring sensual satisfactions--apparently naturally. This thesis underlies all that Locke says in his chapter on power.

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162. 44.

163. 57.

164. 70, 57.





The relativity and subjectivity of good is the underlying and implied thesis of his whole discussion of desire, volition, happiness, good. It is unmistakably affirmed in his bold and vivid illustration of the doctor who gave the right answer when he told his patient who had sore eyes:

"If you have more pleasure in the taste of wine than in the use of your sight, wine is good for you; but if the pleasure of seeing be greater to you than that of drinking, wine is

nought." <sup>165</sup> It is perfectly summarized in his own words when he writes:

The mind has a different relish, as well as the palate; and you will as fruitlessly endeavour to delight all men with riches or glory (which yet some men place their happiness in) as you would to satisfy all men's hunger with cheese or lobsters; which, though very agreeable and delicious fare to some, are to others extremely nauseous and offensive: and many persons would with reason prefer the griping of an hungry belly to those dishes which are a feast to others. Hence it was, I think, that the philosophers of old did in vain inquire, whether summum bonum consisted in riches, or bodily delights, or virtue, or contemplation: and they might have as reasonably disputed, whether the best relish were to be found in apples, plums, or nuts, and have divided themselves into sects upon it. For, as pleasant tastes depend not on the things themselves, but on their agreeableness to this or that particular palate, wherein there is great variety; so the greatest happiness consists in the having those things which produce the greatest pleasure, and in the absence of those which cause any disturbance, any pain. Now these, to different men, are very different things. If, therefore, men in this life only have hope; if in this life only they can enjoy, it is not strange nor unreasonable, that they should seek their happiness by avoiding all things that disease them



The relativity and subjectivity of good is the underlying and implied thesis of his whole discussion of desire, volition, happiness, good. It is unmistakably affirmed in his bold and vivid illustration of the doctor who gave the right answer when he told his patient who had sore eyes: "If you have more pleasure in the taste of wine than in the use of your sight, wine is good for you; but if the pleasure of seeing be greater to you than that of drinking, wine is no good." It is perfectly summarized in his own words when he writes:

The mind has a different relish, as well as the palate; and you will as fruitlessly endeavor to delight all men with riches or glory (which yet some men place their happiness in) as you would to satisfy all men's hunger with cheese or lobsters; which, though very agreeable and delicious to some, are to others extremely noxious and often-alive; and many persons would with reason prefer the grating of an hungry belly to those dishes which are a feast to others. Hence it was, I think, that the philosophers of old did in vain inquire, whether virtue consisted in riches, or bodily delights, or virtue, or contemplation; and they might have as reasonably doubted, whether the best relish were to be found in apples, pines, or nuts, and have divided themselves into sects upon it. For, as pleasant tastes depend not on the things themselves, but on their agreeableness to this or that particular palate, wherein there is great variety; so the greatest happiness consists in the having those things which produce the greatest pleasure, and in the absence of those which cause any disturbance, any pain. Now these, to different men, are very different things. It is therefore, men in this life only have hope; it is this life only they can enjoy, it is not strange nor unreasonable, that they should seek their happiness by avoiding all things that disturb them.



here, and by pursuing all that delight them; wherein it will be no wonder to find variety and difference. For if there be no prospect beyond the grave, the inference is certainly right-- 'Let us eat and drink,' let us enjoy what we delight in, 'for tomorrow we shall die.' This, I think, may serve to show us the reason, who, though all men's desires tend to happiness, yet they are not moved by the same object. Men may choose different things, and yet all choose right; supposing them only like a company of poor insects; whereof some are bees, delighted with flowers and their sweetness; others beetles, delighted with other kinds of viands, which having enjoyed for a season, they would cease to be, and exist no more for ever.<sup>166</sup>

i. Yet he goes on to speak of acknowledged greater  
<sup>167</sup>  
goods which are not desired and therefore not willed. Here is a plain confusion and contradiction. It is impossible to make the idea of acknowledged greater goods intelligible or consistent with his other fundamental dogma that the last, best, judgment necessitates volition; yet he clings to the latter tenaciously. It is by no means clear how, on Locke's theory, one recognizes a greater good to be good for him if his own desire for happiness necessitates his pursuing something else which, by that very act, so Locke insists, he uncompromisingly acknowledges to be best for him. Presumably, Locke would try to clarify this by saying that spinach is an acknowledged greater good because it gives health while liquor is acknowledged to be less good yet pur-

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166. 56.  
 167. 70, 35.  
 168. cf. 48.



here, and by pursuing all that delight them; wherein it will be no wonder to find variety and difference. Now if there be no progress beyond the grave, the inference is certainly right--'Let us eat and drink; let us enjoy what we see--light in, for tomorrow we shall die.' This, I think, may serve to show us the reason, who, though all men's desires tend to happiness, yet they are not moved by the same object. Men may choose different things, and yet all choose right; supposing them only like a company of poor insects; whereof some are bees, delighted with flowers and their sweetness; others beetles, delighted with other kinds of viands, which having enjoyed for a season, they would cease to be, and exist no more for ever.

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168. 56.  
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<sup>169</sup>  
for him is willed; surely, then, it cannot be escaped that  
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 occasion whether or not, on other occasions he sees that  
 spinach is best. Strangely enough, (and here Locke's circu-  
 larity is especially manifest), he says as much himself:  
 "If he prefers it in his present thoughts before any other,  
<sup>170</sup>  
 it is plain he thinks better of it." So it appears that,  
 on Locke's theory, it is really misleading, confusing, and  
 unwarranted, to speak of acknowledged greater goods that  
 are not desired; since, of necessity, men must and do desire  
 and will what is best for themselves. Locke's attempt to  
 introduce extraneous, idealistic, strains into the confused  
 sounds of this shaky symphony are unwarranted by his relativ-  
 istic theory of good and evil. So that, in this instance,  
 even though it be conceded, for the sake of argument, that  
 Locke's man is free to deliberate, he can deliberate only in  
 terms of best satisfying his own subjective preferences.  
 He cannot judge choices by any "proper" or "right" measures.  
 He can judge them only by his own desires, and this reduces  
 again to determination by desire.

ii. Locke contradictorily presupposes another view which  
 is doubtless sound in itself and offers a way of escape from  
 subjective, natural, determination by desire, but which is

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169. 49.

170. 49; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation.



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 If Locke contradictorily presupposes another view which  
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 subjective, natural, determination by desire, but which is



again logically excluded by his theory of relativistic, subjective, good and evil. That presupposition is "the eternal law and nature of things," the real distinction between good and evil, before the bars of which all other tastes and desires must be judged. But clearly, this is out of harmony with any theory which holds that the good is that which is apt to give pleasure to each of us as separate individuals (in this connection, compare the doctor's admonition to the drunkard and the discussion of the summum bonum which was set forth above). If, as Locke's extended theory expresses and implies, good is altogether subjective and relative, then how can it be said that there is an eternal and real distinction between good and evil, that there are "proper" and "wrong" measures of judgment; who is to say which and what these "proper" standards are? So again Locke fails in his attempt to escape the vicious circle involved in the subjective nature of goods in the light of which one's goods must be chosen. And he comes quite close, perhaps reduces exactly, to that view of Hobbes which frankly confesses that "deliberation is nothing else but alternate imagination of the good and evil sequels of an action, or, which is the same thing, alternate hope and fear, or alternate appetite....." In deliberation, one simply considers

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171. 57. *See, also, 173: Italian inserted by the writer of this*

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"whether it be better for himself to do it or not to do  
 it."<sup>172</sup>

iii. Another confusing expression which Locke uses is  
 "good in general" or "all good."<sup>173</sup> This too, would suggest  
 that all persons recognize the same all-inclusive large body  
 of "good" as good, that it has a universal objective reality,  
 and that, therefore, men might, in their pursuit of good,  
 attain objectivity and freedom from the chain of natural  
 desire and the circle of subjective good by judging their  
 subjective desires in the light of real, objective ideals.  
 But again, these words of Locke must be discounted, and his  
 escape to freedom, frustrated, in the light of his theory  
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 that this confusing reference to "all good" or "good in  
 general" can be allowed to mean is simply the recognition  
 that taken together, people do like a vast variety of things,  
 but taken separately (as Locke's relativism exclusively  
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 or "wrong" measures of good. He says himself that the

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172. Hobbes, LN, 273; italics inserted by the writer of this  
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173. 44.

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"variety of pursuits shows that every one does not place his happiness in the same thing, or choose the same way to it."<sup>174</sup> Your measures are your only measures; and mine are my only and necessary ones. So that Locke is accurately interpreted when his words are clarified to read unequivocally that, while one recognizes the broad range of goods that people as a whole enjoy, that, only, is good for him "as is considered and taken to make a necessary part of his happiness."<sup>175</sup>

The conclusion of this discussion of Locke's relativistic, subjectivistic theory of good and evil and its relation to the self's freedom is this, that even if and after the self suspends volition and gives itself to deliberation, it is still the slave of desire, and is not really free. For the self must circularly judge its desires by what is desired. It has no objective standards or ideals by which it can examine the various desires or alternatives in general which present themselves; the good is what the self does desire. What deliberation does for Locke, at best, then, is this: it may reveal to him the most effective means for realizing something that is desired; but it cannot lift him out of the general circle of desires for his own happiness or enable him to will something that ought to be done even though it endangers or destroys his own happiness. Grounds of the highest ethical ought are not contained in Locke's theory.

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174. 55.

175. 44; cf. 43.



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The conclusion of this discussion of Locke's relativistic, subjectivistic theory of good and evil and its relation to the self's freedom is this, that even if and after the self abandons volition and gives itself to deliberation, it is still the slave of desire, and is not really free. For the self must ultimately judge its desires by what is desired. It has no objective standards or ideals by which it can examine the various desires or alternatives in general which present themselves; the good is what the self does desire. What deliberation does for Locke, at best, then, is this: it may reveal to him the most effective means for realizing something that is desired; but it cannot lift him out of the general circle of desires for his own happiness or enable him to will something that ought to be done even though it endangers or destroys his own happiness. Grounds of the highest ethical ought are not contained in Locke's theory.



Impulse may no longer be completely blind; yet it may be criticized in thought; <sup>176</sup>even the "thinking" is determined by the single purpose of the impulse; namely, the best possible satisfying of one's natural, subjective, inescapable desire for his own happiness. "Our desires look beyond our present enjoyments and carry the mind out to absent <sup>176</sup>good," <sup>177</sup>to remote goods, only "according to the necessity which we think there is of it, to the making or increase of <sup>178</sup>our happiness." Even if while thinking is under way, one may "freely" discriminate between desires and choose one which, had he not thought, he would not have chosen blindly, he, nevertheless, in all his thinking and judging, is completely determined by desire, desire for his own happiness. So on Locke's basis, freedom at best is no more or less than careful calculation about the best means of satisfying one's natural (even though each means be not desired in itself and even if it be conceded that, on Locke's theory, <sup>179</sup>"learning to desire" is admissible) desire for one's own greatest happiness. The shallow, hedonistic, nonmoral, non-spiritual, essentially nonrational character of this freedom is readily apparent.

(b) Mercenary, or selfish, morality and religion.

For one thing, even if it is allowed that Locke estab-

176. 61.

177. 57.

178. 61.

179. 71.

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 by the single purpose of the impulse; namely, the best  
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 our happiness." Even if while thinking is under way, one  
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(b) Necessity, or selfish, morally and religiously.  
 For one thing, even if it is allowed that Locke under-



lishes freedom, not only does his theory of good and evil minimize its significance; so does his theory that man is absolutely necessitated to seek his own happiness. If morality is conceived as devotion to that which is right--because it is right rather than because it makes me happy; if morality is conceived as loyalty to objectively valid ideals or to the service of men who are ends in themselves rather than (no matter how well I treat them) means to my happiness; if morality is conceived as implying altruism--but not for what it will give me in return; if morality is related to obedience to God's law not for the sake of securing the reward of eternal happiness for myself but for God's own sake and for the furthering of <sup>his</sup> purposes; if morality is more than the single pursuit of my own selfish happiness (and it surely is more than that, whatever it is), then, supposing that Locke's hedonistic determinism grounds any freedom at all, that freedom, at best, excludes real moral experience. For on Locke's theory, concern, thought, volitions are necessarily, inevitably for, and only for, the prime and necessarily exclusive purpose of satisfying myself. My happiness is the alpha and omega, the beginning and end, of all my living; everything else, the wealth of the earth, inanimate and animate ideals--if any, "sacrificial" service, martyrdom, all other persons, even God himself, are subordinated by me to my well-being, are mere means to my ends.

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happiness; if morality is conceived as upholding eternal--  
but not for what it will give me in return; if morality is  
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and end of all my living; everything else, the wealth of  
the earth, friendships and intimate ideals--if any, "accident-  
al" services, martyrs, all other persons, even God himself,  
are subordinated by me to my well-being, are mere means to  
my ends.



By the nature of my hedonistically determined self, it cannot be otherwise. I may serve God, I may live a good (that is, a self-satisfied) life, I may serve my fellowmen, I may sacrifice my life for a "good" cause; but if I do, I do it first of all and necessarily because it makes me happy. By the nature of my hedonistically determined self my motivation cannot be basically, essentially, that of service to God for God's sake, service to others for their sake, loyalty to ideals because they are right regardless of the cost to me, service to Christ "for Christ's sake." Honesty, at best can be but a policy.<sup>180</sup> If this seems overdrawn, one may read again the chapter on power, one may note especially the remark on whether the drinking man's wine or eyesight is best for him (no consideration at all for the effects of drunkenness on his associates), especially one may note Locke's grounds for men's obeying God--that men may have for themselves eternal happiness through the reward of immortality.<sup>181</sup> If men are free, at all, on Locke's theory they are free to pursue only a mercenary morality, only a mercenary religion. Such freedom is less than that which high morality and high religion require. One advance of Kant over Locke is just at this point, namely, that, though he sees an important connection between morality and

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180. Cf. Windelband, GP, I, 276-280, (HP, 514-517), where a similar interpretation is made.

181. 56, cf. 72.

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 Kant over Locke is that at this point, namely, that, though  
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happiness, he insists on the basic truth that one acts essentially morally when one acts from obligation, not from desire for reward.

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(c) Locke's view subordinates reason to desire.

Such freedom is less, too, than that which pursuit of truth requires. On Locke's theory, there can be no pursuit of truth for truth's sake; one can will only that which he believes will increase his happiness; one can pursue truth only so long as its pursuit or truth's content is a means to his happiness. Reason cannot "unbiased" carry on; reason can face the facts so long as they please, but when the truth leads into unpleasant paths, reason can no longer follow, unless the self which reasons just happens naturally to find happiness in truth no matter how much it hurts him by puncturing the balloons of his delight. On Locke's hedonistic theory, therefore, one who does not like the thought of freedom, for example, simply cannot persist in thinking of it, let alone accepting it as true. On Locke's theory, men can use science, study philosophy, pursue truth, only as the Nazis do, only so long as it serves their own ends; truth as truth is ostracized from the realms of rational inquiry.

(d) Locke's theory contradicts experience.

Not only does Locke's deliberation in the service of hedonism logically exclude the high morality of obligation,

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duty, altruism, and ideals, and disinterested sacrificial pursuit of truth, but, in so doing, it runs counter to the testimony of experience, namely, that such high morality does characterize men's actions and that truth can be pursued when there is no need for it or even when it leads to one's own detriment--as, for example, when Socrates affirms the validity of laws that require his own death, or as when Galileo discovers and publishes new truths, at the risk of his own life. Locke's life itself seems to be partial testimony to the way in which men can be loyal to ideas and ideals even though that loyalty runs counter to the first law of nature, one's own preservation (even though he must flee his homeland to insure his safety). Yet, Locke, of course, should know best whether he wanted to teach the things he taught merely for the sake of his own happiness, or, first of all, and in spite of the cost to himself, because he believed them to be true, of benefit to all mankind, and exemplary of the nature and will of God.

When John Hus boldly proclaimed the independence of men before God, thereby seeking their freedom and well-being, he was doubtless aware that he was endangering his life. He may, at the same time, have believed he would be rewarded in heaven. Yet the clear fact remains that the inspiration and motivation of his actions and his words were not his own happiness, his own reward, but, precisely, his nonhedonistic, altruistic, concern for the well-being of others,

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the triumph of truth and justice, no matter that it meant he would burn at a stake in 1415.

No doubt Martin Neimöller, with all his suffering, finds a kind of peace (though it is doubtful whether one can call it happiness) in his loyalty to his ideal social and religious purpose of ridding Germany of Hitler's irreligious scourge; but how shabby, by contrast, would his heroism seem if he were maintaining his costly stand, first of all, basically, because it made him at peace with his soul or gave him happiness! It is only because he is free to yield to Hitler, yet freely sacrifices his happiness, even life itself if need be, for something beyond and greater than himself and his personal gain or loss, that Martin Niemöller has his moral grandeur. It is instances such as these that dramatically clarify the truth that men as free spirits, by free heroic dedication to things beyond and independent of themselves, or by free, hedonistic, pursuit of their own happiness, enter, in either choice, into moral experience and make themselves morally admirable or morally despised.

4. The necessity of willing what one considers to be best for himself.

a. Exposition:

Even if it were allowed that Locke's theory warrants freedom to deliberate, one thesis would stand as an insurmountable obstacle to real moral freedom. And it is the clearest and most emphatic of all Locke's thesis (in spite

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of his equivocation when he implies that which on his theory<sup>183</sup> is unwarranted, namely, a "greater good" than the one most desired and therefore necessarily willed). The thesis is this, that every volition is necessarily determined by that which one considers to be best for himself. The judgment may be spontaneous, equivalent with uneasiness of desire, or, if deliberation occurs, may be the conclusion of thought. In every instance, however, this is unalterably necessary, that whatever is judged best be willed. Now in this respect, as in others already noted, Locke's view is much like Hobbes's, for, though Locke uses softer, less repugnant language, his view reduces to the one defined in the more direct words of Hobbes: "Of all voluntary acts, the object<sup>184</sup> is to every man his own good." On Locke's theory, that which is willed is identical with what the self judges to be best for itself; it cannot be otherwise. There can be<sup>185</sup> no "indifferency" between the judgment and the volition. Now this would be sound (though thoroughly tautologous) if Locke meant merely, as he sometimes says, the last judgment. But he explicitly says: "In all particular actions that he wills, he does, and necessarily does, will that which he<sup>186</sup> then judges to be good." "Every man is put under a necessity, by his constitution as an intelligent being, to be

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183. 35, cf. 47. inserted by the editor of this discussion.

184. Lev, 138; cf. 49, 120; also LN, 273.

185. 73.

186. 57.

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determined in willing by his own thought and judgment what  
 is best for him to do." <sup>187</sup> As Locke's whole theory of good  
 asserts, "best for him" means nothing other than his own  
 personal pleasure or happiness. Not only man, but God, also,  
 is absolutely thus determined to will that which is best for  
<sup>188</sup>  
 himself.

b. Criticism:

This point of view requires extended criticism.

(1) It destroys moral responsibility.

For one thing, it must be acknowledged that Locke's  
 interpretation of the significance of this necessity of  
 willing what is judged best is readily understandable. In  
 one sense it would be not a fault but "a perfection of our  
 nature, to desire, will, and act (of necessity) according  
 to the last result of a fair examination." <sup>189</sup> It would keep  
 us from committing moral failures. But then, too, (and  
 Locke fails to see it) it would deprive us of moral respon-  
 sibility and of moral freedom. And, empirically, responsi-  
 bility is experienced, while theoretically, it is indispen-  
 sable to morality. So in reply to Locke's question, the  
 answer, here, must be stated: It is "worth the name of freedom  
 to be at liberty to play the fool, and draw shame and misery  
 upon oneself." <sup>190</sup> For only if one is free to do this is he

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187. 49; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation.

188. 50.

189. 48.

190. 51.





praiseworthy for refraining from doing it and for following, instead, the nonnecessitated choice of the good. Intelligence and loyalty to it are necessary to the noble use of freedom, but if one is necessitated to follow his best judgment always, one is not free at all. Freedom is then not fact but fiction.

Locke goes so far as to affirm that even God is com-  
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 pelled to will what he judges to be best. This is true. But it is not true in Locke's sense or for Locke's reason. It is not that God's acts are rigidly necessitated; for then he would be a process, not a person. It is, rather, that God is freely devoted to the creation, realization, and preservation of all possible value. This eternal spirit could do wrong, could will contrary to his best judgment, but if he did, he would be, or become, a devil, not God. As Locke says, God can do no wrong; he must will the best. But as Locke does not say, he must will the best in order to remain God, for God is, by definition, a benevolent spirit whatever else he is; he does not will the best simply because he is rigidly necessitated to do so. For if God were not free to do the wrong, when he judged and did the right, his activity would be more like that of a nonmoral process than like that of a moral person. He would appear to be doing good only because he could not do evil. But the grandeur





of high morality essentially consists in a person's doing good even though he might have freely done evil.

(2) Its analysis of human motivation is inadequate.

Locke's theory rests on an inadequate analysis of human motivation. He holds, here, that the only motivation is the pursuit of one's own happiness, that, therefore, one's judgment of what is best for himself is necessarily willed.

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Now as Karl Groos has observed, psychological hedonism is untenable because men can and do will things other than those which they know would increase their own happiness.

(a) One can, for example, deliberately will what he unquestionably knows to be wrong--even in the sense of working for his own ill. A young man and young woman, outside of marriage, despite their high ideals and full knowledge--even in the moment of the act--that they are surrendering something that can never be recaptured, that they will regret it deeply through long years following, may nevertheless yield to the temptation of marital relations. It is groundless to say they did not know better; they indubitably knew what was best, but they moved in the opposite direction.

(b) Any one of, say, four acknowledged goods (relatively good by degrees) can be selected and willed. One may acknowledge the welfare of mankind to be of greatest worth, the writing of a great book to be next in value, the building





of a cathedral to be next, and yet (supposing oneself able to contribute to or create any one of them) deliberately choose to loaf along the seashore. Contrary to this view of Locke, a man's judgment as to what really is best is not of necessity willed. It is because of this freedom to do less than the best possible and because men use it that immorality exists. Without this freedom to do right or wrong, neither immorality nor morality could be part of human life. Only necessary processes would go on.

(c) Most clearly, one can act in the interest of others; and this can be the primary motivation; any happiness or consciousness of happiness following from the act can be wholly incidental. Surely Socrates did not consent to die, rather, than flee, because he found happiness in it; rather, the basic motivation of his act was the well-being of the youth of Athens and the recognition of the importance, for mankind, of obedience to the laws. One may argue, if he will, that Socrates found happiness in so doing and that that was the necessary cause of his doing it; and it will be admitted that he doubtless found satisfaction incidentally. But the thing that gave and gives his action moral grandeur in men's eyes is nothing other than the recognition that his deed was not primarily motivated by his desire for his own happiness, but by the possible welfare of society, no matter if it cost his very life. Further still, one can seek the well-being of others rather than his own (even





though, in a particular instance, he despises doing it) simply because of his clear consciousness that he ought to do it. Both because he is concerned about his own safety and because he despises the man who is now endangered by a flaming forest, one may want exceedingly to let him burn; yet, because of his clear conviction that he ought to save any human being, he will even risk his life to save this man's.

(d) So, also, one can respond to a moral ideal which he recognizes as having authority over him, even though it is clear to him that, if he is true to it, he will suffer the most horrifying pain and anguish. "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Is it possible that any one will seriously interpret this tremendous volition as the will basically to satisfy one's own desire for his own happiness?

All these are but a few of the kinds and illustrations of volitions which prove that man need not and often does not will that which he judges best for his own personal well-being. Though attempts are made to interpret all these in terms of hedonistic determinism, it is clear that the only way in which such a theory can be acknowledged to include them is for its advocates dogmatically to insist on what their theory assumes even though psychological analysis defies it, namely, that willing is identical, in its aim, with wanting selfish satisfaction. The fact is that willing may





have many different objects only one of which is the fulfillment of one's own yearning for happiness.

(3) Other implications of Locke's thesis for morality.

(a) For one thing, if one must will what he judges to be best and the action turns out to be a wrong one, the failure is not a moral failure. It is only an unavoidable error of judgment. This, as such, is good ethics; but Locke is to be criticized because, though he sees that men are not condemned by God for not knowing what they could not know, he still seems to hold that, on his view, men's acts can be morally wrong. But, in fact, on his theory, the only possible error is error in thought, not morality.

(b) Because one is necessitated to do the thing he judges to be best for himself, he can do no wrong. He simply acts as necessitated. And moral distinctions in actions vanish.

(c) On a sounder theory of good than that which Locke asserts, on the theory that there is a real distinction between good and evil and that, for example, whether one likes it or not, honesty is an ideal which demands the allegiance of all persons; on this theory, according to Locke's argument that one must will what he thinks best for himself, if one does not desire to be honest in a certain instance, if he thinks honesty will work against his own best interests and happiness, he simply cannot be honest. Unless he is made happy by doing what is right, in each instance, he





cannot, in those instances, do right.

(d) As Professor Wayland Vaughan clearly implies,<sup>193</sup> it is only in the belief that one can act contrary to one's best judgment that regret becomes intelligible.

(e) If one insists, as one must finally insist, that on Locke's presuppositions, one is not really free to deliberate but either is or is not, in each instance, naturally necessitated to it, then it is clear (since, in addition, what appears best for oneself must be willed) that man's total activity is completely necessitated and moral experience is utterly destroyed. Man's total activity is the ongoing process, the chain of necessary desires and satisfactions, the unswerving pursuit of his own selfish happiness. Man is reduced to a mechanism or a process and has no essentially moral nature or experience at all.

#### 5. Criticism of the theory as a whole.

Thus far in the course of this discussion of Locke's theories of personal freedom, criticism has been associated explicitly with specific parts of his exposition--freedom as power to perform what is willed, determination by the uneasiness of desire, the power of deliberation, the necessity of willing what is considered best for one's self; at the same time, criticism has been essentially of a negative nature. Locke's theory of personal freedom is now to be

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193. GP, 642; cf. James, WB, 175 and A, 3, b, (2) of this chapter.





criticized as a whole, first, in negative and then in positive terms.

a. Negative criticism of Locke's theory as a whole.

(1) Locke's theory is incoherent and his theory and his life are inconsistent.

Though Locke must here be interpreted as a determinist, he is, in fact, not a thoroughgoing determinist, or a thoroughgoing hedonist, or even a thoroughly consistent ethical relativist. This point must, in itself, be emphasized; and it must be stressed, too, that this is both a favorable and unfavorable fact for Locke. It is favorable, as will be noted in the section devoted to positive criticism, in the sense that it shows Locke's basic intuition of the necessity and reality of freedom, an affirmation implied not only by his occasional words but also by his life of religious, intellectual, moral, and social inquiry and activity. But it is unfavorable in the sense that it vividly reveals Locke's uncertainty, unclarity, inconsistency, and incoherence in his view as a whole.

The point of the following criticisms is not, therefore, that Locke, in fact, was a thoroughgoing determinist or hedonist or relativist, in life or even in certain affirmations; it is, rather, that in his Essay, where he dealt most extensively and most earnestly with, and repeatedly revised, his view of the self's nature and activity, he never clearly, cogently, and consistently got beyond the limits of mechanism,





hedonism, and relativism; that even here he had intuitions of and sought grounds for freedom but that the often explicit and always implicit principle of natural, hedonistic, determinism stood in the way of his success. It is, therefore, neither Locke's life nor the practical, and occasionally theoretical, presuppositions of that life that are challenged here; it is, rather, Locke's extended theory of the self as set forth in the Essay, particularly, in the chapter on power. It is agreed, at the outset, that it is, in part, surprising that a man of such great social concern should, in his explicit theory of the nature of man, limit himself to determinism and hedonism. It is no doubt now time to clarify and justify again this deterministic, hedonistic interpretation of Locke.

(2) Locke must be interpreted as a determinist.

Locke's qualifications and attempts to establish freedom are not to be lightly passed over; yet, for reasons, it must be maintained that Locke's view is essentially deterministic.

The intimations of freedom which accompany his exposition are out of harmony with the dominant theme and underlying current of his entire chapter. That theme is crystallized in his assertion that no volition is made (not even the volition to think) except as it is necessitated by a prevailing, naturally present, and dominant, uneasiness. If he meant to affirm freedom or if he wished to warrant such an affirmation, he should boldly have affirmed that





this uneasiness may be spiritually initiated (not, presumably, only necessarily and naturally begun) and that, even so, it need not be yielded to by the will; he should, at the barest minimum, have at least coherently related this necessitation of each volition by natural and strong uneasiness with his affirmation of the liberty to think. This he did not succeed in doing not only because he did not attempt it, but also because it cannot be done. On Locke's theory, thinking is possible only if necessitated by the uneasiness of desire or the pursuit of happiness; such necessitation, however clothed, is not spiritual freedom.

If Locke meant to affirm forthrightly the reality of freedom, he never should have made (and in repeated revisions left unchanged) the unequivocal statement that man's freedom consists in the power to execute what is willed (for this does not touch the problem of the self's freedom at all, much less establish it); further, he never should have affirmed that the same necessity which drives men to the pursuit of happiness and necessitates their deliberating constitutes the only freedom men have. Further than this, he never should have maintained that a man must will what he judges to be best; for, on the presupposition of the relativity of good, this allows no response to moral obligation or response to duty or service to God for their sake and, thus affords no escape from the basic and natural necessitation toward the pursuit of one's own happiness; and, on





the presupposition of an objectively real distinction between right and wrong or good and evil, and the psychological and spiritual distinction between desire and duty or wish and ought, it allows no moral freedom to do right because it ought to be done. Naturally necessitated freedom to deliberate and lack of any freedom to will the wrong destroy the distinction (in conjunction with the theory of relative good and evil) between real right and wrong, in theory, and in practice. Such freedom is neither rational freedom nor moral freedom but is, rather, from its presupposition upward, natural necessitation. It must be added, further, that if Locke meant to establish spiritual freedom, he should not have denied its possibility both before the judgment of thought and between the judgment and the volition. If freedom (whether "indifferency" or not) cannot manifest itself at either place, how can it manifest itself at all?

If Locke really intended to establish freedom, he should have made his conception of personality clearly and unmistakably spiritual as distinct from natural; he should have abandoned substances, especially as unknown or as possibly material in essence; he should have recognized the essential nature of all thought and consciousness as spiritual activity. For materiality logically requires thoroughgoing necessity and excludes spiritual freedom, while skepticism about substances or faith in them gives no positive





warrant whatsoever for affirming anything about the nature and activity of a self which is dependent on it. And passivity of thought in perception tends in the direction of the mind's subordination to the activity of nature.

One must not forbear adding that Locke's unclarity, inconsistency, and disconnectedness cannot be excused on the ground of the brevity of his discourse or the lack of time and attention devoted to it (for it was a much-disputed, oft-revised, and lengthy section of the Essay). One must conclude, rather, that if he meant to assert real spiritual freedom and if he had succeeded in justifying it, it would have been readily evident on one's careful and repeated reading of his discourse. It is not insignificant to note, finally, that Locke's view of the self's activity is interpreted as deterministic even by those who expound the same view more clearly and cogently. Several of these thinkers<sup>194</sup> are Anthony Collins, Jonathan Edwards, and David Hume. And it has been similarly interpreted by Locke's critics who believe in freedom, such as Fraser, Palmer, and Hudson.

(3) Locke's theory is unclear and inconsistent.

It must be stressed, too, that one of Locke's greatest weaknesses in his chapter on power is his ambiguity, tautology, and circularity of exposition and terminology. Consider several instances of these failings.<sup>195</sup>

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194. Collins, Art.(1717), 366.

195. Cf. A, 4, b,c(3) and (4).





(a) Locke says the strongest motive ordinarily determines volition. But what has he said? Since there is no way of measuring the strength of motives, and no way of proving or disproving such a hypothesis, Locke's case rests in good degree on an untouchable assumption. Since it adds  
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nothing to knowledge, it is mere tautology. It is, as well, a circular argument; and it goes like this: what a man wills is the unquestionable sign of the man's more pressing uneasiness; and, the most pressing uneasiness necessarily determines the will. But all this profits nothing--unless it can be proved; and it cannot be touched.

(b) Locke speaks of desire and its necessitation in a sometimes confusing manner. It usually means present uneasiness of desire for happiness and its necessary determination of volition--even the necessitation of deliberation in the pursuit of happiness. But then, in the light of this clear principle of necessitation of every volition by desire, Locke says that men, in certain instances, should have done otherwise than as they did. Now if he means necessity, all talk of should have is utterly meaningless. If he means by should have that they could have done otherwise, then he cannot mean that they were necessitated.

(c) Related to this is Locke's assertion that whatever is willed is wanted. But he adds darkness rather than light





by this observation because he fails to see that his assertion is true only if want is interpreted in a far broader sense than his hedonistic theory allows. Clearly, one cannot will what he does not choose to will; but equally clearly, one can will acts which are motivated by other wants or wishes than those which aim only at the exclusive pursuit of one's own happiness. There are wants and wishes and volitions imitated by them which are themselves spiritually, rather than naturally, initiated and which aim not at the satisfaction of one's desire for happiness but at obedience to moral precepts because they ought to be obeyed, at service to others for their own sakes, at devotion to the laws of God and his purposes for his sake, rather than for one's own.<sup>197</sup> If, therefore, Locke, or any other determinist, asserts that one cannot will what he does not wish, he is not only unclear, but unfair, unless he emphatically draws this distinction between natural and spiritual, processional and personal, imitations and aims. For it is only in the non-Lockean, nonhedonistic sense that Locke's assertion of the determination of volitions by wants, wishes, and desires can be held to be true. Yet, Locke never clearly notes this fundamental and illuminating distinction at all.

(d) Again Locke contributes confusion rather than clarity when, on the one hand, he speaks of acknowledged greater

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197. Cf. Palmer, PF, 193.





goods which are not desired and, on the other, affirms that "if he prefers it in his present thought before any other, it is plain he thinks better of it." <sup>198</sup> So, on the one hand stands the fuzzy reference to goods that are acknowledged to be greater, yet not desired, and, on the other, the statement that the good which is most strongly desired and willed is at the same time the one which is plainly judged to be best.

Such tautologies, ambiguities, and circularities make interpretation and criticism difficult and detract greatly from the cogency and persuasiveness of Locke's exposition on the nature of the self.

(4) Locke's basic theories are disconnected.

Another major weakness of Locke's discourse on power is its failure coherently to relate the independent and, as such, contradictory, yet fundamental, assertions (1) that the power to execute what one wills is all the freedom a man has; (2) that volitions, including thinking, are always necessitated by specific, or prevailing, uneasinesses, at best by a natural and inescapable desire for one's own happiness; and (3) that in the power of deliberation (though absolutely <sup>199</sup> necessitated) "lies the liberty man has." These are Locke's basic principles; and, even if they were not quite contradictory in themselves, it would scarcely be possible strictly

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198. 49.

199. 48.





to deduce real spiritual freedom from them.

(5) Locke's necessity is only a postulate, not certain knowledge.

Locke's theory implicitly, when not explicitly, presupposes a natural necessity which Locke, nevertheless, admits is not an object of certain knowledge; he says precisely that there is no "certain knowledge of universal truths concerning natural bodies." It is only probable knowledge; it is, therefore, only a postulate. So Locke proceeds with his deterministic theory of the self even though he acknowledges that his presupposition of necessity in natural law is un-<sup>200</sup>proved and, as he believes, unprovable. Thus, as for all determinists, so for Locke! The a priori argument for determinism is by no means conclusive. Neither, however, is Hudson's criticism that Locke is excluded from holding a theory of freedom because absence of necessity in natural law "reveals the knower as subject to it and not the eternal<sup>201</sup> and sovereign legislator of that law." For, as has been noted before, what freedom requires is not rigid necessity in natural law or anywhere but, simply, a degree of uniformity which makes reasonable prediction possible. Locke is excluded from real spiritual freedom, but not on the grounds suggested by Hudson. And his argument for determinism

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200. Essay IV, iii, 25; cited by Hudson, PLBH, 38. cf. Essay, IV, ii, 26, where he says: "Certainty and demonstration are things we must not, in these matters, pretend to."

201. PLBH, 39.





is inconclusive on his own theory of the uncertain nature of the knowledge of necessity.

(6) Locke's psychological hedonism and common sense.

Locke's hedonism is erroneous psychology and poor common sense, and at the same time excludes moral freedom. Hedonism maintains that man's only motivation to thought or action is the pursuit of his own happiness. But psychological examination makes it clear that the conscious motives of men which move them to action unquestionably (and there is no reason to believe that one's subconscious activity necessarily opposes it) include such ends as the service of others, of God, of ideals--for their own sakes. These may be willed by men without any consciousness on their part that they want to do so for their own happiness. They may be dominated, rather, by the clear consciousness only that they ought to do so or that they want to do so for the well-being of others or the advancement of God's purposes. There is a marked distinction between mere selfish desire, on the one hand, and the clear moral ought or the sacrifice of self for others, on the other. How clear the difference is between even enlightened self-interest (the best Locke's theory gives), which operates on the assumption that "the very end of our freedom" is "that we may attain the (personally, subjectively, satisfying) end we choose"<sup>202</sup> and selfless, heroic,





devotion to objectively authoritative ideals and sacrificial service of God and other persons on the presupposition that the end of our freedom is not the attainment of what we naturally desire for ourselves, but the realization of ideals which lift men above nature and, whatever the cost, enable them to develop the kind of characters which spiritual persons ought to achieve. How clear it is that the only freedom (if any) that Locke allows is the freedom to pursue one's own selfish ends and that he never establishes that kind of freedom which is essential to the morality which roots in the power to distinguish between objective good and evil and the power to choose either good or evil.

(7) In a comprehensive negative criticism of Locke's theory of the self's activity or personal freedom, it is perhaps not unwarranted to cite an explicit instance which proves the inadequacy of his view to establish any moral freedom and, thus, moral responsibility.

By countless persons, including empiricistic determinists related to Locke, former Prime Minister Chamberlain of England has been severely criticized for his failure to oppose and defeat Hitler before the latter had attained to such tremendous power as to engulf the whole world in devastating war. Now such criticism may be well warranted; but, on Locke's theory it cannot be justified at all. The prime minister, on Locke's theory, can be condemned neither for his failure to gather adequate information, nor to think





more understandingly about it. For, because of his given, prevailing uneasiness, he was necessitated to think when he did and as he did; he could think no more often or no less, and no more adequately; his mind was prohibited from doing differently. And, just as his uneasinesses necessarily determined when and how he did and did not think, so also his uneasinesses necessitated his doing, in overt acts, exactly what he did. It is Locke, not his critic, who is insisting that every volition, even that of thinking, is necessitated by one's inescapable desire for, and inevitable pursuit of, one's own happiness. But it is the critic who is stressing the actual implication of Locke's assertion and, by this illustration, showing the logical absurdity of Locke's saying of the prime minister, or of anyone at any time, that he should have done differently, that he should have stopped to think, that he should have kept himself better informed, that he should have acted differently, that he should have declared war on Germany long before he did. For on Locke's theory he could have done no otherwise; every volition is absolutely necessitated by the prevailing uneasiness, and that's the whole of the matter; what was done was done because it had to be done. So when Locke places responsibility for actions on persons or says they should have done differently, he is either boldly rejecting his basic presupposition of determination by uneasiness, and assuming freedom without warranting it, or he is utterly





unaware of a crucial and devastating contradiction in his discourse. In either event, his exposition is distinctly inadequate.

(8) Locke's narrow empiricism is inadequate.

One of Locke's basic difficulties rests on his empiricism which is concerned so much with what men can know that he fails sufficiently to consider how men can know.

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As Bowne would point out, he stresses that area of experience which comes from sensations and reflections and fails to consider that area of experience which is the thinking person himself. In fact, as has been noted before, he believes that original ideas are simple and passively received--on this level, at least, explicitly excluding the activity of the thinking self.

One serious consequence of this way of thinking is that, in his concern for what men can know and his lack of concern for how men can know (which, later, was Kant's contribution to philosophy), the thinker's intellectual eyes are pressed so closely to the ground that, though they see certain disconnected parts clearly, they do not see the widely scattered and equally relevant data and fail especially to see the far-reaching decisive implications, for the whole, of even those parts which they do see clearly. So

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Locke, by his exclusive purpose and selected data, is led

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203. Met.<sup>2</sup>, 4, 5 ff.; Hudson, PLBH, stresses this.

204. Locke, Essay, Intro., 2.





to a kind of mechanism or natural determinism which he might well never have maintained if he had included in his considerations the implications of his one-sided conclusion--the implications that thought presupposes a thinker, that knowledge presupposes a knower. Had he looked more in the direction of the self itself, he might have seen that morality, conceived as the pursuit of "the true intrinsic good or ill that is in things,"<sup>205</sup> presupposes a free self, that religion requires it too, that the spiritual significance and dignity of man is inseparable from it, and that man's possibilities of controlling his world and his society under an ideal purpose also presuppose it. Locke was so obsessed with concerns and presuppositions which, of themselves, exclude freedom that he did not sufficiently consider the data which alone can ground freedom, can make possible the proving of any claim or justify the moral life. Had he looked more in the direction of the knower as well as the known, he would have perceived the truth that, though his selected, limited, data clearly exclude freedom, a comprehensive view of experience points to freedom and reveals it as indispensable to a coherent interpretation of life as a whole.<sup>206</sup> He would have seen that all postulates or principles, such as necessity itself, are categories of minds first of

205. 54.

206. Compare Locke's own recognition of the significance of one's data for his conclusions; in CU, 209.





all and, therefore, subordinate to minds, not masters of them. As Hudson so ardently affirms and as Bowne clearly shows, it is intelligence that explains the categories and not the categories, intelligence. Intelligence, which requires freedom, is, therefore, logically and metaphysically prior to the category of necessity which would exclude it. This fundamental fact Locke fails to consider sufficiently.

(9) Locke's determinism and the infinite regress.

Locke's determinism defeats itself in its infinite  
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 regress. Both an uncaused cause and an eternal cause are inconsistent with it; yet how can both be escaped? If one does admit, as both Hobbes and Locke who were Christian believers would admit, that the eternal God ordered everything that is, including necessary causation in certain realms at least, then he admits, first, that God, as the ordainer of the principle, is superior to it, second, that he is therefore as free from its control as he chooses to be, and, third, that spirit is then essentially superior and independent of the world of nature. Admitting that God could order the world on the principle of causal necessity, which is not the essence of God's own nature, one would have difficulty arguing that he could not order persons as free spirits when free spirituality is the very essence of God's own being. Interestingly enough, though Locke does not intimate it in

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207. Cf. Fraser, LE, I, 367, n.





his chapter on power, he does admit this very possibility when he resolves "that if it be possible for God to make a free agent, then man is free, though I see not the way of it." <sup>208</sup> If there be any meaning whatsoever in the historic statement that man is created in the image of God and if God be a free, uncaused, eternal spirit, certainly it must mean that man is created a free spirit. Nor is the precise means whereby God could institute a principle of necessity in certain areas any more readily comprehensible than the precise procedure whereby God could create free spirits.

(10) Negative criticism in summary.

In conclusion of this negative criticism of Locke's theory as a whole, then, it may be said that whether or not Locke intends to establish real spiritual freedom, freedom from determination by the natural uneasiness of desire or any other sequential necessity, he does not succeed in establishing it. For, most exactly interpreted, and despite his equivocation, Locke's theory reduces to determinism. Even when most freedomistically interpreted, Locke's "freedom" (if "freedom" may properly be used to designate it) does not consist in that freedom which is essential to disinterested inquiry after truth, high moral experience and responsibility, a tenable conception of God or a nonmercenary religion, or a conception of man which makes all men

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208. Locke, Art.(1693)<sup>2</sup>, 305; cited by Fraser, LE, I, 316, n. 2.





clearly ends in themselves, both willing and able to create, and to dwell together in, a society which altruistically seeks the well-being of all.

b. Locke's positive contributions to a theory of freedom.

In spite of all that has been said by way of negative criticism of Locke's conception of the self's activity, it must be recalled that Locke is not without serious equivocation and ambiguity and that, therefore, he introduces into his discourse, in the Essay and elsewhere, clear statements and less clear intimations that point to his awareness of and, sometimes, belief in, factors which contribute to or are wholly intelligible only on a theory of freedom. It is these positive insights of Locke that are to be noted now.

(1) Locke's admission of a distinction between real good and evil.

Locke's mention of an eternal distinction between right and wrong and his reference to "the true intrinsic good or ill that is in things,"<sup>209</sup> though reduced in significance by his extended affirmation of the relativity of good and evil, nevertheless indicate that Locke believes in a level of life and reality which is distinct from nature and which provides man with spiritual insights and motivations. And this is essential to real spiritual freedom.

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(2) Locke's assertion of moral responsibility.

Though it is doubtful that it can be held on the basis of Locke's general theory, Locke nevertheless asserts that men are responsible for their moral actions. He says, for example, that they should, in instances, have thought or done otherwise. He asserts that men can learn to desire what they do not spontaneously desire but which clearly leads to their happiness, that, even when not desired in itself, an object or an act may be willed because it is acknowledged as a means to happiness. Though all these abilities are limited by the chain of necessitating desire for one's own happiness (and, in this sense, reducible to a process of necessity or determination), they are, nevertheless, capacities which are relevant to freedom, abilities which come most completely to expression and are interpreted in their full significance in conjunction with the principle of freedom. For on this basis one is free to do what he ought to do, whether it, first of all, brings him happiness or not.

(3) Locke's emphasis on man's responsibility for thinking.

Locke is especially interested in proving man's responsibility for deliberating, for thinking before acting. This power to think is at the very heart of spiritual freedom; it alone enables man to realize his freedom and to employ it either well or poorly. It is essential that Locke's view be sufficiently commended. His assertion is to be criticized





not in itself but because it seems impossible on Locke's deterministic view which subordinates it to nature. For this subordination makes reason the enslaved servant of natural desire or the necessary pursuit of one's own happiness. On Locke's theory, it fails to establish responsibility in the human self and lets it rest back on the natural process. Spiritual freedom requires that the power to think be a free power which the self possesses in itself and for itself, to which the processes of nature are subordinated and by which the processes of nature are employed. This places responsibility on persons and not on the process. Though Locke is far from adequately understanding and interpreting this power of deliberation, this power of thinking, he is nevertheless to be credited with recognizing that freedom, to be significant, requires rationality and thinking. He comes most explicitly to this freedomistic insight when he writes: "Without liberty, the understanding would be to no purpose: and without understanding, liberty (if it could be) would signify nothing."<sup>210</sup>

(4) Locke's necessitated freedom.

Even on Locke's theory that the same necessity which drives to the pursuit of happiness drives men to deliberation, deliberation is to be seen as a constructive rather than a negative insight. For it does, in many instances,





provide (though not for escape from the necessary pursuit of one's own happiness) for a more enlightened pursuit which may supplant man's otherwise completely blind surrender to spontaneous desire.

(5) Locke's assertion of man's responsibility for avoidable ignorance and inadvertency.

Locke makes assertions about ignorance and inadvertency which presuppose or imply freedom and which are reasonable on the basis of freedom. For it is a fact that a free person may be held morally responsible (and Locke affirms that men are) for acts which he commits on the basis of ignorance which he might have overcome or after overlooking "even that which he does know." <sup>211</sup> Locke is to be commended, then, on seeing that men are free to overcome their ignorance in measure and to determine for themselves the degree of care with which they will think about their decisions. But he is to be criticized on the grounds that this freedom could scarcely exist if men were determined naturally, in all volitions--including thinking, by the prevailing uneasiness of desire. For, on that basis, whatever a man does, when it is done, must be seen as having been completely determined by the process which necessitates determination by uneasiness and to which all persons are subordinated.





(6) Miscellaneous contributions to a theory of freedom.

Five other statements, at least, reveal in Locke his intuition and presupposition of spiritual freedom--even though his basic exposition would seem to exclude it.

(a) One of these is his observation that the executive's power of prerogative is often rightfully accompanied by the people's confidence in the executive, even if his actions prove to be to the discomfort of the people--so long as the executive's intentions are good and his mistakes not too disastrous.<sup>212</sup> Now intentions have real moral significance only where responsibility for intentions is real. Since only a free spirit possesses this responsibility and, thus, can have morally meaningful intentions, in judging a man's intentions to be good, one implies that he is free and responsible. One implies, too, that that freedom is more than a mere power to perform; it is a freedom of the spirit which is real even though performance prove to be unsuccessful. So Locke here tacitly affirms man's freedom, even though his theory of deliberation fails to establish it and his determinism quite excludes it.

(b) A second statement is Locke's bold assertion that "God having given man an understanding to direct his actions,<sup>213</sup> has allowed him a freedom of will...."

(c) A third intimation of freedom consists of his

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212. Gov., II, 165.

213. 58.





resolving that "if it be possible for God to make a free agent, then man is free, though I see not the way of it." He even goes so far as to say: "I cannot have a clearer perception of any thing than that I am free."<sup>214</sup>

(d) A fourth intimation of freedom is the insight that the more one is loyal to a grand purpose, the more he is freed from detailed distractions and spontaneous, unguided, surrender to natural impulses.<sup>215</sup> Unfortunately, Locke refers only to the grand purpose of pursuing one's own happiness. But the fact is that his view is sound also for such purposes as basically seek other ends, such as moral ends, duty, fulfillment of obligation, service to God and others for their own sakes. So Locke's insight, limited as it is, is, nevertheless, significant for freedom.

(e) A fifth suggestion of freedom consists of his criticism of Hobbes and Spinoza for "resolving all, even the thoughts and will of men, into an irresistible, fatal necessity."<sup>216</sup>

All these statements and inferences from Locke's writings corroborate the suggestion, made earlier in this paper, that Locke belongs to that group of thinkers who recognize the need for spiritual freedom in man, who even go so far in

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214. Locke, Art.(1693)<sup>2</sup>, 305; cf. Fraser, LE, I, 316, n.2. where he cites the first quotation.

215. 52.

216. Locke, Art.(1693)<sup>1</sup>, 257; cf. Hudson, PLBH, 43 and Fraser, LE, I, xlvi.





certain instances as to presuppose it, yet are so obsessed with the persuasive idea of necessity that, in the main, their conceptions of the self's activity are dominated by it, are fundamentally deterministic.

### C. Historical Influence of Locke's Theory.

It would be of considerable interest to trace the widespread influence of Locke's thought concerning the freedom of the self. So widespread, in fact, was that influence that it might prove to be impossible to trace it completely. For, as Fraser has noted, so much was written on the basis of the stimulus of Locke's chapter "that the literature of 'free will,' in last century England (the eighteenth century),<sup>217</sup> might form a small library." If a thorough investigation were made, it would possibly turn out that Locke's chapter not only touched off a heated discussion in his own day, involving men like Anthony Collins, Samuel Clarke, Bishop Stillingfleet, and Leibnitz, but exerted significant influence, negative or positive, on Berkeley, Butler, Hume, J. S. Mill, Jonathan Edwards, Kant, Voltaire, Cousin, Hamilton, Fraser, T. H. Green, Palmer, and Whitehead; and these are but a few of all that might be mentioned.

But it is not within the limits of this dissertation to make this extended study. Attention will now, therefore, be turned back to the main concern of the paper, to Locke's

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217. Fraser, LE, I, 372, n.

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conception of freedom. That conception having been examined and criticized in relation to the self, it will now be expounded and evaluated in its social context, in its meaning for religion, politics, and economics. Thereafter, certain important lines of the influence of Locke's conception of social freedom will be briefly traced.





### CHAPTER III

#### LOCKE'S CONCEPTION OF SOCIAL FREEDOM

The last chapter dealt with Locke's view of the freedom of the self. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine Locke's conception of social freedom, political, economic, religious, and to trace certain lines of its influence in subsequent thought and history. First, then, to a consideration of the former.

##### A. Locke's Theory of Social Freedom Expounded, Compared, and Criticized.

##### 1. Locke's theory of social freedom and his conception of man.

Because one's conception of man is basic to and inseparable from his social theory, if it is sound, it is imperative that, at the outset of this inquiry, the relation of Locke's social theory to his view of man be considered. Locke's social theory must later be expounded and criticized in detail. But it is necessary now that that theory be outlined briefly in order that its relation to his view of man may be considered.

##### a. Locke's social theory.

Locke's theory of social organization could stand on the exclusive principle of self-interest, freedom for me. And in a sense, this is Locke's primary concern. Yet Locke's theory, as a matter of fact, goes beyond mere self-interest to concern for others, not merely as means to one's own





freedom, but as ends in themselves. In brief, his view, in addition to his conception of man, consists of these theses: that government exists only on the free consent, the common consent, of the people; that representative government is founded on majority rule; that there should be a large measure of religious tolerance and that the church and state should be independent of each other; that tyranny must be absolutely discountenanced, and, under certain conditions, overthrown by violence; that, when necessary to freedom, persons or governments may properly use force; that slavery is essentially to be despised and forbidden; that all men should have a part of the wealth of the earth sufficient to meet their needs and that private property should be protected by government. Through it all runs the principle that government exists for one purpose, the public good, this public good being the means to my freedom, my concern for the public good being a condition of my immortal bliss, but aiming at the same time at the well-being of all mankind on the altruistic impulse which roots in the belief that all persons are of greatest worth and, therefore, ends in themselves.

#### b. Locke's view of man and his social theory.

Whereas, for Hobbes, government, in fact if not in basic theory, exists as the expression of the will of the person in power and thus is quite compatible with the hedonistic determinism which necessitates the exclusive pursuit





of one's self-interest (exemplified in the tyrant), and whereas Rousseau's theory of the natural feeling of good will among all persons is compatible with a highly democratic theory of government in which each member seeks the well-being of all,<sup>1</sup> Locke's view, which mingles self-interest, and interest in others as ends in themselves, is not adequately grounded in the deterministic, hedonistic view of man which he holds in the Essay. While in fact complicating this theoretical difficulty, he transcends it, in his political theory, simply by assuming in the nature of man that which the Essay never established. Now let this thesis be expounded in detail.

(1) The man of the Essay.

In the Essay, though even there Locke introduced extraneous elements of freedom and altruism of a kind (to be rewarded in heaven), his essential view of man was that he was naturally determined in all his volitions by the necessary pursuit of his own happiness. Now if it is insisted that, on this view, Locke's man would never be free to think but could think only when natural desire necessitated it, it is quite difficult to see how he (or they, that is, numbers of man) could commit himself to any complicated ideal of government, such as democracy, how he could, in fact be a controller of mechanisms rather than a mechanism himself.

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1. Windelband, HP, 519.

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If, on the other hand, it be allowed that Locke's man is free to think about ways of achieving his greatest happiness (and even this is a concession to Locke) it is clear that, if he chooses democracy as his best means to his happiness, not only the ideal but the persons with whom he is associated can be looked on not as ends in themselves but only as means to his own well-being. Democracy would be compatible with this view of man, but it would not raise men to the level of being treated as more than mere means. This theory of man would be compatible, in fact, even with this-worldly altruism if the Christian morality and Christian religion were accepted. This suggests other data of Locke's view which significantly bear on the nature of man and his fitness for democratic society, for the achievement of the greatest possible freedom for all in social relations.

## (2) Man in the light of Christian revelation.

That Locke's view of man is significantly influenced by Christian revelation, that it adds, to man, attributes which Locke's purely psychological or philosophical inquiry could never have touched, is clearly evident. The basic insight that is pertinent here is that Christian morality--which admonishes altruism, charity, good will, cooperation, tolerance, and the like, all of which are contrary to narrow hedonism--is, without doubt, in Locke's mind, the only complete, adequate, and true morality. But as has

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been suggested, this charitable morality, to which man is called and which he is able to acknowledge and pursue, is not grounded in the natural nature of man. It is imposed "from above." It is the fruit of Christian revelation. Nevertheless, Locke insists, it is approved by reason-- though reason had not discovered it before Christ and might not have discovered it for centuries to come. Yet this morality of altruism in this life (which is compatible with Locke's liberal, humanitarian view of social organization) is compatible, too, with Locke's view of man as hedonistically determined.

The reason is this: that Christian morality is accompanied by the assurance of the Christian faith as a whole that he who heeds the Christian ethics will be rewarded by eternal bliss! So again it is emphasized that Locke's democratic government could exist if men were free at least to think but were otherwise wholly determined to pursue their own happiness. For through cooperation with, and concern for, others here, they would not only satisfy self-interest here (if they deemed cooperation to their best interests here) but they would be guaranteeing their eternal happiness. Locke has explicitly said that one of the great values of the Christian revelation is that it gave men an inducement to be good. And this inducement, coupled with psychological hedonism, enables men to see beyond their selfish interests in this world, for the sake of a selfish interest





which reaches into and throughout the next. It is the thesis of this paper that the altruistic element in Locke's theory of government is made compatible with his theory of man not essentially on his philosophical argument, as such, but on the revelation of a morality which rewards this-worldly altruism with other-worldly hedonistic bliss, a revelation which Christ brought and which Locke insists would have been most slowly, if ever, achieved by the labors of reason. It is the thesis of this paper, further, that certain purely nonhedonistic, nondeterministic insights concerning the nature of man and social organization were held by Locke not basically as the discoveries of reason but as revelations of the Christian faith.

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When one, therefore, says, as does Borgeaud that Locke approached the theory of social contract "completely free from all thought of religion", he is in danger of serious misinterpretation. Clearly Locke argues from his view of the nature of man, from natural law; but equally truly, thought not so readily discernible (unless one examines Locke's thought in various of his works) the conception of man from which Locke argues is a conception which his reason alone never established, a conception of man which, in its most significant aspects, was the fruit, basically,





of Christian revelation and Locke's persuasion of its truth, though reason might never have discovered it alone. The fact that reason approves it is Locke's way of emphasizing that reason must judge of revelation, but it is at the same time an emphasis on a breach in Locke's thought, for revelation brings insights which reason's analysis in the Essay failed to discern. Reason argued psychological hedonism; the Christian revelation stirred up in Locke convictions as to the nature of man which transcend both the hedonism and the determinism of the Essay as well as the tendency to hold human spirits on the level of nature.

Consider, for a moment, several of these nonnaturalistic, nonhedonistic, nondeterministic elements which were not the basic fruit of reason or nature, as such, but the insights inspired by Christian revelation. And as they are considered, remember that it is these religious insights that transcend Locke's reasoned conception of man and enable his social theory to be more than a theory of exclusive self-interest, make it, as well, to throb with the impulse of altruism and concern for others as ends in themselves, even, at times apart from any consideration of the glories of heaven.

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3. Gov., II, 56.

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(a) One of these elements in Locke's conception of man is his belief in the freedom of the will. At one time



he says he cannot see how it is possible that the will can be free, but that if God can make it so, it is free. In asserting this, then, Locke is at once admitting (as his chapter on power enables one to understand) that he cannot believe in the freedom of the will on the basis of reason, and that he does, nevertheless, believe in it on the basis of God's mysterious power. In another context, too, Locke suggests that the self is free to forget self-interest and seek only the truth and (it seems implied) the well-being that truth brings to others, notably, in this particular instance, the untolerated dissenters of religion. Thus he writes:

Disputes, especially of religion, should be waged purely for the sake of truth, and not for our own self: self should have nothing to do in them. 4

Still earlier, he had written his first letter on tolerance so that all men might come to enjoy "the same rights that  
5  
are granted to others". Again he had said:

I shall not be so unreasonable as to expect, whatever you promise, that you should lay by your learning to embrace truth and own what will not perhaps suit very well with your circumstances and interest. 6

Here he implies that the will is free to direct thinking toward truth regardless of personal consequences. Further implying the reality of the disinterested freedom of the

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4. T, IV, 550; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation.

5. T, I, 51; cf. T, I, 3.

6. T, III, 545.

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4. T. IV, 550; letter inserted by the writer of this dissertation.  
5. T. I, 31; cf. T. I, 3.  
6. T. III, 842.



will, he insisted that he was defending tolerance for

a party that has so few preferments to bestow; so few benefices to reward the endeavours of any one who appears for it; that I conclude I shall easily be believed when I say, that neither hopes of preferment, nor a design to recommend myself to those I live amongst, has biased my understanding, or mislead me in my undertaking. <sup>7</sup>

He even speaks of "men who have souls large enough to prefer the true interest of the public, before that of party", <sup>8</sup> and of "rational creatures" who, if they will not live up to the rule of their reason "cannot be excused for it." <sup>9</sup> So the freedom Locke is asserting here, contrary to the Essay, not only denies determinism but also cancels hedonism and admits objectivity and altruism.

(b) Not only does this freedom of the will seem to be the fruit of Locke's Christian conviction rather than the conclusion of reason; so, too, does his basic principle of the law of reason which "obliges everyone" <sup>10</sup> and teaches

all mankind, who will consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions  
.....<sup>11</sup>

In Locke's analysis of the self's motivation, all that the drunkard was to consider was his own happiness, whether he

7. T, III, 544.

8. T, I, 4; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation.

9. RC, 11.

10. Gov., II, 11, 57.

11. Gov., II, 6.





preferred liquor or sight; no consideration whatsoever for others was implied; simply complete determination to seek one's own personal pleasure. But here Locke maintains, and in a spirit of sincere, altruistic concern for others as ends in themselves, that the law of reason commands that everyone should be concerned about the well-being of others as ends; in saying it, he seems as concerned about them as about himself, and wholly unconcerned about his reward in heaven for saying it! It is not Locke's hedonistically deterministic analysis of the self; it is, rather, the Christian revelation of the worth of man permeating Locke's mind and coloring his whole system of thought, that constitutes really the essential content of Locke's so-called law of nature, which is his law of reason. Locke's law of reason, as grounded in nature, not only differs from Burke's theory that rights are grounded in tradition and vested interests, but differs also in that its content is not discovered in nature or reason but is provided, basically, by Christianity.

(c) Likewise, Locke's conviction--which gives him his soundest grounds in man's nature for the altruistic elements of his social thought--that "our (not my) souls are of more<sup>12</sup> worth than all the world" and that, as rational beings, we<sup>13</sup>

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12. D. S. Miller, at the Boston University Philosophical Club, Dec. 2, 1942.

13. RC, 117; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation. Locke gives man's possession of reason as his ground for man's worth, not his freedom; but both are essential to it.







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are "almost equal to the angels," surely transcends any naturalistic view of the self or any hedonistic principle which implied that other persons are but means to my ends. Here, again, not the analysis of reason, primarily, but the revelation of religion, supplies Locke with the insight that men, as free, rational, spirits, are "of more worth than all the world"--to which they stand opposed. As such, they are ends, not means and (as the so-called law of reason requires) ought to be treated so.

(d) One other datum in the nature of man, which seems to have the aura of religion about it more strongly than it has the mood of the Essay and its reasoned view of the self is the insight (most significant in theories of social thought) that "obedience is due in the first place to God and afterwards to the laws." <sup>15</sup> Hedonism may well require one's self-centeredness in the pursuit of happiness; but it is something more than selfishness that requires a man to be true to his moral conscience even in opposition to society which may punish or persecute him, especially if a man has not thought of his eternal compensation for it. That something more is a supernatural, spiritual, conception of men and morality; and that came to Locke, too, not from rational empiricism, but from religious revelation.

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14. Gov., I, 58; cf. RC, 133.

15. T, I, 43.





When one dwells on Locke's view of man and society, though one notes that self-interest is often and, perhaps, usually dominant, a recognition of man's spiritual worth and a spirit of altruism are also there, a recognition and a spirit which would be incompatible with Locke's conception of man were it limited to the insights of his rational analysis of the Essay; a recognition and a spirit which are initiated by religion, and which constitute for Locke, in content and not in coherence, an adequate conception of man and make the altruistic elements of his social thought consistent with his view of man. Therefore, <sup>if</sup> it is asserted that Locke's theory of government had no roots in religion, or if his law of nature or law of reason is interpreted as being literally a law of nature or of reason, an all-important factor in Locke's social thought is entirely overlooked. The fact is that Locke's law of nature and of reason, his social contract, his theory of government, his conception of man, are by no means grounded exclusively in nature or in reason, as such, but are mightily influenced by Christian revelation and Locke's persuasion of its truth--seemingly as an extraneous appendage, rather than as a coherently related part, of a coherent whole view of man, the appendage in many respects, and especially for the altruistic elements of Locke's social thought, being the most significant part of his conception of man.





Hudson is, therefore, right when he notes that "Locke's empiricism never sees that which makes the social regard<sup>16</sup> fundamentally possible and eternally imperative," but that, nevertheless,

whether he could rationally justify it or not, Locke believed in a religion in the very center of whose doctrine is the message of the eternal worth of the spiritual self.....which is free through the truth, and whose supreme duty is to recognize other selves as equally eternal and free.<sup>17</sup>

The point of these remarks then is this: that Locke's social theory and the view of man he presupposes in it both transcend the rationally argued conception of man in the Essay and complete that conception and that theory by permeating them with essential Christian insights. Locke's failing, then, does not consist in his having inadequate convictions and intuitions on the nature of man. The man he presupposes is adequate to the altruistic elements in his social theory; but the argument which ought to support his theory of man is not consistently or coherently worked out.

It is the further thesis of this paper that Locke's theory, grounded as it is in self-interest as well as altruism, is essentially sound in principle. For democracy is a bi-polar concept, a two-sided concern. In some situations, one seeks to further the causes of freedom and

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16. PLBH, 44.

17. PLBH, 45.





democracy, to increase the public good, because it is a means to his own greatest well-being. In other situations, one may sacrifice everything he has, even life itself (with no necessary belief in or hope of eternal bliss), for the sake of freedom and democracy, as noble ideals in themselves, or as insuring the well-being of others, of millions of men and women whose voices he has never heard, whose names he never knew, or who are, themselves, as yet unborn. As a matter of fact, is it not true that, the more earnestly one longs and strives for the achievement of high democracy, the more concerned he usually is for others and the less concerned about himself? And the more narrowly selfish one is the more one will either prefer jungle-like anarchy, or tyranny, or exploitation, on the one hand, or, on the other, throw up a curtain of talk about the glories of democracy while working behind it for his own selfish ends. In democratic government, the end is, as Locke says, the good of each; it is my private good, but also your private good and yours and yours. So that the end of democracy is two-starred; it is equally private good and public good; it is, at the same time, self-interest and altruism. Locke is to be commended, then, in that his social principles carry the necessary overtones of both, even if, at times, in differing contexts, his stress on one seems almost to exclude the other.





## 2. The religious roots of Locke's theory of social freedom.

Thus far it has been suggested that, in numerous respects, Locke's conception of man was made compatible with his social theory as a whole, especially its altruistic elements, because of the influence of Christianity on it; it is now, briefly, asserted in addition, and in the boldest contradiction of any view which denies or minimizes the influence of religion in it, that Locke's theory of government, according to his own interpretation, is inseparable from religion. Religion is its indispensable foundation. It is not that governments exist by divine right; on the contrary, this view Locke ardently denies. It is, rather, that "promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an<sup>18</sup>atheist." No state can exist unless its citizens fear God; and no person is to be tolerated who denies the being of God. How now can one any longer say that Locke's theory of social contract or his argument in general had little or nothing to do with religion! According to his own inconsistent words, government is impossible apart from the basic presupposition of religion.

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18. T, I, 41; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation; cf. Laski who is, in a sense, right but who, nevertheless, is in danger of overlooking the significance of Locke's deep religious conviction when he says: "Locke is, in fact, the first of English thinkers the basis of whose argument is mainly secular." (PTE, 58.)





Locke, then, believes religion indispensable to government. The essential criticism to be made of that belief at this time (it will be treated again under the discussion of tolerance and minorities), roots in the fact that it presupposes his mercenary morality and religion, that men could have no moral dependability unless, in their moral failures, they feared the punishment of God. This presupposition of mercenary morality, as has been argued in this paper, not only fails to exhaust the nature of morality, but it fails to account for the truly free and altruistic elements of Locke's social thought.

### 3. Social freedom and social contract.

#### a. Exposition

In Locke's scattered thoughts, which express his broad but none-too-coherent conception of man, there are two vividly apparent but somewhat estranged principles. One of them would tend to leave man, while under the law of nature, that is, without government, on the level on which Hobbes's theory placed him, in the condition of ceaseless war, in the realm of the jungle, to which Hobbes refers when he writes:

That miserable condition of war.....is necessarily consequent.....to the natural passions of men, when there is no visible power to keep them in awe....." 19

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19. Hobbes, Lev., 153.





That principle is the principle of selfishness, expressed by Locke in the unequivocal assertion that men "had rather injuriously prey upon the fruits of other men's labours than take pains to provide for themselves." <sup>20</sup> The other principle, which transcends Hobbes and narrow selfishness, is the principle of the law of nature as the law of reason which obliges everyone to seek the preservation and well-being of all mankind. Now the clear proof that, despite his hedonism and his theory of man's selfishness, Locke, in his social thought, makes the law of reason the dominant principle in man is that it is this principle on which he grounds his socially basic theory of social contract. But the principle of selfishness is nevertheless real.

So from his conception of man as a selfish being who, nevertheless, possesses reason, "the common rule and measure God hath given to mankind," <sup>21</sup> and whose natural state, even, seems, at times, to be to "live together according to reason," Locke develops his theory of social contract. It presupposes that the state of nature is a state in which men, in large measure, heed the admonition to seek the preservation of all men, but in which they thus stand unprotected against the selfish attacks of those persons who live by the law of the jungle rather than the law of reason.

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20. T, I, 42.

21. Gov., II, 11.





The only compact that puts an end to the state of nature and unites persons under a form of government is "this one of agreeing together mutually to enter into one community, and make one body politic; other promises and compacts men may make one with another, and yet still be in the state of nature."

<sup>22</sup> Agreeing together, consenting together, freely, voluntarily, in the interest of the well-being of all-- that is the heart of the matter for Locke. Contract always and only between free persons on free consent to give up certain personal rights which they possess under the law of nature in order to enjoy the rights of nature more fully, under group protection from the threats to their rights made by lawless and powerful groups or individuals. <sup>23</sup> Because this contract rests exclusively on consent, it cannot be enforced, for example, from one generation to another, except in the light of the expressed or implied consent of each individual of each succeeding generation. But more important than that, the social contract is binding on the people only so long as the government which was instituted to represent the people's will remains true to its trust. <sup>24</sup> Members of a society owe "no obedience but to the public will of the society." <sup>25</sup> In every commonwealth there still remains "'in the people a supreme power to remove or alter

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22. Gov., II, 14.

23. Gov., II, 99.

24. Gov., II, 116.

25. Gov., II, 151.





the legislative' when they find the legislative act contrary<sup>26</sup> to the trust reposed in them." Such contract is to safeguard<sup>27</sup> and enlarge freedom; but it destroys anarchy. Locke denounces Robert Filmore's thesis that freedom is the right to do what one pleases, and insists that "freedom of men under government is, to have a standing rule to live by, common to everyone of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it;....."<sup>28</sup> But he emphasizes equally that such contract also implies and safeguards "a liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rule prescribes not; and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man....."<sup>28</sup> This statement not only recalls Locke's remarks in the Essay on freedom as the power to perform what one wills, but also suggests that, despite his hedonistic emphasis, he does not really excuse or approve the selfish domination of one man to the injury of others.

#### b. Criticism.

(1) What marked similarity there is between Rousseau and Locke on this matter of social contract; what sharp differences between Locke and Hobbes. Not to speak of Machiavelli! Locke and Rousseau are the spokesmen of liberty, defying Hobbes and Hitler, Machiavelli and Mussolini. Rousseau agrees that contract roots in consent and that the sovereign power is the will

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26. Gov., II, 149.

27. Gov., II, 57.

28. Gov., II, 22.





of the people always. But Hobbes holds that contract, whether between persons who would protect themselves from each other or between persons and their conqueror, roots in fear. So for Hobbes, if one submits to a ruler no matter under what conditions, he is bound by that chain forever. Worse than that, bound forever also are his children and his children's children through all generations. Though Hobbes holds precisely that contract is entered into for the highest well-being of men, his developed theory of government certainly belies this affirmation. Once consent is given, no matter under what conditions, no matter how horrible the circumstances of life under the government become, obedience is owed to that government forever.

(2) Locke's theory of consent, obviously, is superior to Hobbes's, and that for several reasons. First, it recognizes throughout that with which it began, namely, the presupposition that all men, princes and people, are equal by the decree of nature; Hobbes began with this, but forgot it. Second, it is consistent with its basic law of nature, namely, that all men's preservation and well-being, above all else, are the things to be sought after; Hobbes had said this, too, but had forgotten it. Third, it is consistent with the only intelligible meaning of the term contract. For contract in any form means and must mean, if it means anything, not what Hobbes claims, but what Locke affirms. Contract implies basically that the agreement is equally binding on both parties to it--





on the people, to be sure, but no less on the person or persons in whom they embody their trust. Whether the prince betrays the people's trust in him, whether people defy the laws of a truly representative government which the majority will supports, it makes little difference; in either case the contract is broken by those acts against the letter and spirit of the common contract.

(3) But what of the idea of social contract, itself? Is it an adequate description of the rise of government? Is it an adequate conception of the grounds of government?

It must be admitted, first of all, that it is scarcely <sup>29</sup> an accurate description of how governments come into existence. As a historical account of the nature of government, then, Locke's theory is inadequate. It is difficult to find even insignificant illustrations of peoples freely compacting together in government (though the founding of the United States somewhat approaches it). It is probable that there never was a so-called actual state of nature. Governments existed, and exist even now, as the consequence of at least three quite widely recognized causes, which are far more basic and empirically evident than that of many people freely entering, from a state of nature, into a social compact.

For one thing, the very nature of life appears to be, not atomistic, but organic. Men are born into families;

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29. Stephens, ETEC, II, 140 ff; cf. Gooch, EDI, 344.







families are associated together by ties of kinship; peoples are bound together by interests and cultures which permeate them before they are old enough to choose from among others; as a child of a people, of a clan or a larger group, as a part of a cultural pattern, as united by bonds of kinship and love, men do not live as atomistic units; they are born as members of society. And this is prior to any fact or theory of social contract.

For another thing, men are held together by the bonds of utility. To say that a man is free to leave his group if he prefers is not to speak an untruth. Sometimes men are free to leave, and do leave, because they do not consent to the government which rules over them. But more often, the members of society, no matter how disagreeable the government over them may be, because of the organic relations which for them are indestructible, because of the limitations of financial means without which they could not transport themselves to another area, but, above all, because they would, in most instances, naturally choose to live under any government, however mean, rather than give up the conveniences of their society and undergo the pains of transition, most human beings have remained and, no doubt, will continue to remain under the jurisdiction of organized government in the land of their birth. Because of the organic nature of human life, then, and because of the conveniences of men's remaining with the group into which they are born, organicism and utility turn out to







be the more basic factors which account for the existence of government.

And a third basic cause of the existence of peoples under governments, which is prior to consent or compact, is the wide-spread unreflectiveness or mental lethargy which has all too long characterized the masses of men. If one were to ask any one of countless ordinary citizens why he was a citizen of the United States rather than of Germany, or of England rather than France, he would scarcely imagine that he had any choice whatsoever. He is a citizen of his own land, he would say, because he was born there. It would scarcely occur to him that such a concept as that of social contract had ever even entered into the mind of man.

Yet to say that Locke's theory of social contract is an inadequate description of the grounds for the historical existence of governments is not to say that his theory of social contract is not a basic principle on which governments of civilized men should be grounded. In their zest for criticizing Locke's inadequate theory of history, critics have been all too prone to overlook the ethical truth permeating, underlying his view. Though governments have not come into existence through the medium of an actual social contract, it must be affirmed that, among enlightened peoples, government is adequate to the nature of human personality only when it is grounded in the consent of the people. This may not hold





for primitive peoples; but it is indispensable to self-conscious, rational, morally disciplined peoples. It is the distinctive mark of respect for personality.

The fact is that, in the main, people are not free to consent or to refuse to consent, in the sense that they may simply leave a society of which they do not approve. In extreme instances, they may and they do--as in the flight of the early Puritans to America, of Locke to Europe, of the modern Germans from Germany. But in the main, men are, in no real sense, free to move to another society or to seek anarchist bliss on lonely isles (for even the isles are largely governed now). Nevertheless, they possess the ethical right to contain the power of sovereignty in themselves; they possess the right of self-government; they possess the right of free criticism; they possess the ethical right of revolution when rulers rule to their own interests and to the injury of the members of the state. Though they are, in the main, bound to the land by organic, utilitarian, and intellectual circumstances, they nevertheless possess the ethical right to consent or to refuse to consent. On the moral plane and within these limits, then, Locke's theory of social contract is not only sound but fundamentally indispensable to the governments of civilized persons.

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practical necessity of majority rule, at least so long as no more adequate principle can be discovered. The theory of social contract, then, ethically and practically, is an everlastingly valid principle, in this sense, that within the limits of organicism, utility, intellectual conditions, and the practical principle of majority rule, civilized, rational, disciplined peoples should govern themselves and submit to no other. So long as the powers of the government come from the people, so long as the rule is by majority will, so long it is meaningful to say that the people are free, that they consent to their government, that they have a social contract; but when that is absent, when sovereignty does not rest in the people, when freedom of expression is prohibited, when the majority does not rule and an oligarchy or tyrant rules instead, then the people cannot be said to consent, then rather than contract there is compulsion, then men are not free but enslaved. And, in order to recapture the freedom to which they are entitled and to be ruled by a government to which they consent, they possess the natural right (since their organic relations and the conveniences of staying in their homeland almost exclude their voluntary exile) to rise in revolution and to throw off the tyrant's yoke.

Seen in such a light, though it be admitted that his theory is an inadequate interpretation of the history of government, it must also be affirmed that Locke's theory of social





contract is by no means to be speedily discounted but is, rather, to be recognized as the basic ethical principle of all governments in which men are sufficiently civilized to be conscious of their own worth and the worth of every human soul. The great and eternal truth permeating Locke's theory of social contract and the ideal which flamed in his spirit were the truth and the ideal of government of the people, by the people, and for the people, government to which the people (frankly recognizing and accepting the limitations within which social relations must be carried on and desiring not perfection by only the best possible) could consent.

4. The ends and means (or form of organization) of government.

a. The ends of government.

As has already been suggested, government exists, according to Locke, for the benefit of each and the benefit of all. But the narrow self-interest of the tyrant or which leads to any other injustice is despised.<sup>30</sup> To secure the largest possible social freedom, through voluntary cooperation, is the thing for which governments exist. I am not the only end; all men are equally important ends in themselves.

So throughout Locke's literature there runs a two-fold emphasis, truly two-fold, because, though the good of all is often conceived as the means to the good of each,

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30. Gov., I, 42.





the good of others as ends in themselves, is often the dynamic inspiration of enthusiastic democrats--as is illustrated by Locke's own defense, and justification of his defense, of dissenters, in a nonself-interested attitude. Sometimes Locke's concern seems to be dominantly one of self-interest.

The commonwealth seems to me to be a society of men constituted only for the procuring, pre- 31 serving, and advancing their own civil interests.

The political society is instituted for no other end, but only to secure every man's possession of the things of this life.<sup>32</sup>

But even at this most selfish pitch, Locke's implied thesis is that the well-being of men in society is inseparable from good will and cooperation. And at its best, Locke's view is expressed in terms which imply a concern "for others" as the end, almost as though, at times, and in accord with the Christian admonition, Locke had forgotten his own self-interest, as such. Here, for example, is the altruistic 33 note: "The end of government is the good of mankind."

"The public good (not special, private, privilege) is the 34 rule and measure of all law-making." Peace and tranquillity (not tyrannical self-aggrandizement, not the conflict of selfish exploitation by persons of special privilege,

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31. T, I, 9.

32. T, I, 43; cf. Locke's statement to the effect that: "Men enter societies.....for the defense of their temporal goods." (T, I, 42.)

33. Gov., II, 229.

34. T, I, 30.





not the struggle for personal or party pride and power, not the jingle-jangle of the jungle) but "peace and tranquillity.....is the business of government and the end of human society."<sup>35</sup> Locke labors for the well-being of self, but not for selfishness. Locke seeks the well-being of self, but not of a few dominating selves of special privilege. He seeks the well-being of all the selves of earth, the good of all mankind.

By that good is meant all the "things of this life." Thus he writes:

Civil interests I call life, liberty, health and indolency of body; and the possession of outward things, such as money, lands, houses, furniture, and the like.<sup>36</sup>

These, then, are the ends which Locke thinks, in principle, governments exist to achieve. That Locke's bi-polar--self-interested and altruistic--theory is deemed adequate in this paper, and why it is deemed so, has already been suggested under the discussion of Locke's conception of man and its relation to his social thought.

b. The means, or form of organization, of government.

The best form of government is, in general, that form which has basic concern "for the end why people entered into society," namely, "to preserve one entire, free, independent society, to be governed by its own laws....."<sup>37</sup>

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35. Gov., I, 106.

36. T, I, 10.

37. Gov., II, 217, cf. 222.





Locke conceives the "political power" which belongs to good governments to include

the right of making laws with penalties of death, and consequently of less penalties, for the regulating and preserving of property, and of employing the force of the community, in the execution of such laws, and in the defense of the commonwealth from foreign injury and all this only for the public good.<sup>38</sup>

The best form of government, according to Locke, consists of two essential branches (though he frequently alludes specifically to a third great responsibility of government, namely, courts and judges); these branches are the legislative and the executive.

The legislative is brought into power by the vote of the majority and the vote of the majority decides the actions of that legislative. Locke would have understood readily the folly of the demand for unanimity in the legal actions of the League of Nations, for he saw the impossibility of unanimity in any sensible government; strikingly he expressed it when he said that any demand for universal agreement would leave society somewhat as it once found Cato<sup>39</sup> who went into the theatre, "only to go out again." No society, on that basis, could maintain its existence. Majority rule is the best possible, the fairest and most stable, basis for carrying on government.

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38. Gov., II, 3; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation.

39. Gov., II, 98.





The chief function of the legislative, which is the  
<sup>40</sup> soul of the commonwealth, is to make laws which express  
<sup>41</sup> the majority will of the people. These laws must be  
 "founded on the law of nature, by which they are to be  
<sup>42</sup> regulated and interpreted." The power to make laws can-  
<sup>43</sup> not be transferred to any other hands. Under this theory,  
 then, laws, not persons, are the true embodiment of the  
 will of the people and the sovereignty of a state.

Nevertheless, there must be persons or a person rep-  
 resenting the people's will to enforce the laws which  
 their will creates; this person is the executive. In  
 Locke's view, not only internal matters, but interna-  
 tional matters, too, should come under the charge of this  
<sup>44</sup> executive. In each case, his task is to defend the com-  
 munity and execute its laws. He therefore possesses the  
 power of meting out punishment for crimes, a power of  
 punishing which has a two-fold purpose; one is to repair  
 any loss sustained by specific parties as a consequence of  
 crimes and the other is to safeguard the community from  
 repetitions of such crimes. Locke expresses the view that  
 if by some crime no loss is sustained by any person and no  
 actual hurt is done to the community in the present or

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40. Gov., II, 212.

41. Gov., II, 217

42. Gov., II, 12.

43. Gov., II, 141.

44. Gov., II, 147





future, no punishment whatsoever should be meted out-- for the fundamental purpose of government, more fundamental than specific laws and punishments, is its insuring and enlarging of the well-being of "all mankind," even offenders against the laws.<sup>45</sup> Another distinctive power of the executive is the power of prerogative, the power given the executive to act in emergencies in the interest of the community when laws governing certain actions do not exist and cannot be made in time to cover situations that necessitate immediate action, power even to act contrary to the laws established if in certain unforeseen circumstances the act is clearly in the interest of the community. Locke might have approved, for example, President Roosevelt's recent threat to act on prices if Congress failed to do so; he would approve of an executive's exercising his power of prerogative, even though occasionally his judgment proved to be wrong, if in the main it were clear that his intentions and his actions were directed toward the well-being of the community.<sup>46</sup> One other matter should be emphasized in connection with the executive's power; it is a power rightly undergirded by the use of force, both internally applied and externally administered when the cause is just.

Now what shall be said by way of comparison and criticism of this theory of government? First of all it should

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45. Gov., II, 159.

46. Gov., II, 165.





be pointed out that in placing sovereignty in the people and the laws, Locke is the companion of Rousseau while, at times Plato, and Machiavelli and Hobbes, walk down other lanes. Locke and Rousseau place sovereignty in the people and their laws; Plato, Machiavelli, and Hobbes place it in the person or persons of those in power or in the laws which they decree. Though this cannot be said of Plato, for the latter two, whoever rules is right! By way of criticism, this much must be said of Locke's view of government, its functions and its powers: That though it stands opposed to the views of great philosophers who have expounded theories as to where sovereignty should rest, he, not they, stands in the right. If government is for the well-being of men (and this is, for all who believe in the Christian insight that persons are the seat of value and of greater worth than the whole world, the basic presupposition of government), then it must follow that the sovereign power must rest in them, that is, in their laws, and by no means in the persons of those who represent them. It is the laws that are sacred, not the prince's person; it is the laws that are to be obeyed, not the prince's will. For it is in allegiance to their own freely formulated laws that man's freedom is secured. On these terms the executive is controlled by the laws and in turn all persons are compelled by the executive to obey the laws. Only by the obedience of all is the freedom of all secured. To express





it differently, to be ruled by the wavering will of the majority may be less efficient, but it is free; to be ruled by the will of a man or a group of men may be more efficient, but the people who are ruled are always in theory, and too often in fact, subjected as slaves, no longer free and independent persons; and the wisdom of the group is sacrificed to the dogmatic will of an élite.

5. The place of force in Locke's theory of social freedom.

a. First of all, let his view be expounded in detail.

In two different directions but toward the same end, according to Locke, force of arms may, yea, must, be employed for the single end of the preservation of the greatest possible freedom for all. The government must, on the one hand, use force to protect the society against attack from without and against law-breakers within; but it can never be justly employed to sustain tyrannical rule or for other than the public good. On the other hand it is natural, necessary, right, and approved of God that, under certain conditions, the people resort to violence to preserve or secure their freedom against tyrannical rule and the preservation of their natural rights.

(1) Locke gives not the slightest suggestion that he ever dreamed of a day, of which some have had visions, when the state would wither away or when moral force alone would be sufficient to govern the world. For Locke, force





is indispensable to the execution of civil laws and the maintenance of civil government. This he holds, first of all, because "laws are of no force at all without penalties" which, in turn, cannot be applied without the use of force. It is held, in the second place, because free and independent governments cannot endure as such unless, with force, they defend themselves against foreign invaders.

(2) On the other hand, by Locke, tyranny (which involves the threat or use of force for the subjugation of persons naturally born free and deserving freedom) is utterly discountenanced and, in the defense or pursuit of his freedom, man is held to possess the right of revolution by violence. But this is warranted only when no other alternative remains, when no appeal is possible to an honorable court or when the tyrant cannot be dissuaded from his policy. Otherwise, "any attempt upon the government..... is certainly the greatest crime men can be guilty of, one towards another." The right to use force to maintain or secure freedom is affirmed, somewhat on the authority of Scriptural revelation, to have the sanction even of God and to be legitimate even for Christians.

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47. T, I, 12.

48. Gov., II, 13, 176, 186, 198.

49. Gov., II, 207.

50. Gov., II, 218.

51. Gov., II, 196, 222.

52. Gov., II, 192.





b. Let a few comments be made on Locke's view of the place of force in man's struggle for political freedom.

(1) For one thing Locke's thought stands in clear relief against the background of the views of the social philosophers of history. In his insistence on the necessity of force to sustain governments, he stands in the long line of thinkers who have asserted it. What Hobbes says, so Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hegel, Fichte, and Locke would say: "Covenants, without the sword, are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all."<sup>53</sup> They would also stand together in asserting that states must defend themselves, by force, against invaders from without.

With respect to the right of the use of force, by subjects, against a government exercising power over them, Locke stands at odds with Hobbes and in strong accord with Rousseau. Hobbes approves revolution under no circumstances; whoever rules is right and citizens must accept him. But in opposition to this, Locke holds with Rousseau that revolution is sometimes indispensable, since, under certain circumstances, it is the only sufficient alternative, and since "renoncer à sa liberté, c'est renoncer à sa qualité d'homme."<sup>54</sup>

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53. *Lev.*, 154; cf. Locke, T, I, 12.

54. *CS*, 642.





(2) It is in examining Locke's views on the place of force in man's securing and maintaining his social freedom that one sees most clearly what Locke believes to be the only just ground for the existence of governments and what he means by the end of government, by the well-being of mankind. For in his discussion of the place of force, Locke's hierarchy of values becomes evident. In order of decreasing importance to man, he deems life's values to run something like this: truth, freedom, equality, justice, peace.

As has been suggested, it is not that Locke treats revolution lightly or that he does <sup>not see</sup> <sub>A</sub> the horrifying cost of war; for he says:

This I am sure, whoever, either ruler or subject, by force goes about to invade the rights of either prince or people, and lays the foundations for overturning the constitution and form of any just government, is highly guilty of the greatest crime, I think, a man is capable of; being to answer for all those mischiefs of blood, rapine, and desolation, which the breaking to pieces of government brings on a country. And he who does it, is justly to be esteemed the common enemy and pest of mankind, and is to be treated accordingly.<sup>55</sup>

It is rather that he sees even more vividly the tragedy of peace which deprives man of his freedom and believes that, under certain circumstances, freedom can be secured only by the resort to violence. So he writes:

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55. Gov., II, 230; italics inserted by the writer of this dissertation.





If the innocent honest man must quietly quit all he has, for peace sake, to him who will lay violent hands upon it, I desire it may be considered, what a kind of peace there will be in the world, which consists only in violence and rapine; and which is to be maintained only for the benefit of robbers and oppressors. Who would not think it an admirable peace betwixt the mighty and the mean, when the lamb, without resistance, yielded his throat to be torn by the imperious wolf? Polyphemus's den gives us a perfect pattern of such a peace, and such a government, wherein Ulysses and his companions had nothing to do, but quietly to suffer themselves to be devoured. And no doubt Ulysses, who was a prudent man, preached up passive obedience, and exhorted them to a quiet submission, by representing to them of what concernment peace was to mankind; and by showing the inconveniencies might happen, if they should offer to resist Polyphemus, who had now the power over them.<sup>56</sup>

Because Locke prefers freedom to peace, and because he believes governments should exist for no more important end than that <sup>of</sup> freedom, Locke would agree with Brand Blanshard that absolute pacifism is positively immoral.

(3) Now what shall be said by way of criticism of Locke's views of force?

(a) Locke stands in accord with the realities of human nature, human history, and human aspiration, when he emphasizes the fact that the real cause of revolutions is not, as is so easily assumed by some, the greediness and thirst for power on the part of common men, but is the

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56. Gov., II, 228.





ultimately unbearable inconsiderateness, domination, exploitation of the people by their rulers. In this sound affirmation, Locke stands with mixed company, with Machiavelli, with Marx and Engels, and with Tocqueville.<sup>57</sup>

(b) It is indisputably clear that government can sustain itself, in internal relations only by the use of force for the execution of its laws; Locke is unquestionably sound.

(c) It seems equally clear that, under certain political circumstances, peoples dominated by tyrants can secure their freedom either by waiting for the tyrant and his influences to die a natural death or by throwing off his yoke, if possible, by resort to violence. It is quite possible, that the nonviolent, noncooperation of Gandhi and his followers may prove effective, in relation to the British imperialists, in throwing off their yoke; but there appears no adequate reason for believing that the peoples of Europe will find freedom in that fashion, first, because the people themselves are untutored in, and unpersuaded of the possibilities of the success of the technique of nonviolent noncooperation, and, second, because abundant evidence points to the fact that the Nazis are insufficiently impressed with spiritual power to be readily ousted from control by any such techniques.

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57. Locke, Gov., II, 228; T, I, 49-50, 53; Tocqueville, SSF, 250-257.





(d) So far as the world at large and the persistence of warfare in the earth are concerned, this may be said. Locke's theory of the necessity of the use of force was sound in his day and is still sound because, under the historical circumstances of his day and this day--when numerous nations have existed as absolute, self-interested, sovereigns in one world, now exceedingly organic in its fundamental cultural and economic structure--warfare is inevitable.

So long as there are numerous absolute sovereigns when there logically is room for but one, so long as uncooperative, jungle-like, capitalistic, competition in the economic realm characterizes the life of the sovereign nations, so long as the concept of numerous absolute sovereignties engenders the spirit of nationalism and the thirst for power, so long as such raging currents flow, war seems inescapable. Such currents as these, if not themselves altered by the cooperative intelligence and enterprise of men, will lead again and again to the same end. St. Paul was right: "Whatsoever a man (a nation, or a world) soweth, that shall he also reap." This is by no means fatalism. It is simply a defense of the view that under such circumstances, the use of force between nations is inevitable. For the desire for self-preservation and for freedom being deep-rooted in man's nature, when the fate of one's nation





and the people's freedom are brought into danger--as a consequence of the conflict brought on by those who foster the currents that lead to war, freedom-loving peoples will again return to arms. War cannot be evaded at the last day; it can be removed from the earth only if the causes are removed before they gather that degree of power which drives the nations, necessarily, inevitably, into the chaos of war. War cannot be evaded either by wishing or resolute willing alone; it, and the natural use of force for freedom, can be outlawed only through intelligent planning.

It is, therefore, the thesis of this study, in accord with Locke, that war will remain inevitable, and that, so long as men cherish freedom, in certain political situations, resort to violence will be necessary and warranted in attempts to preserve it, unless and until the causes of war are destroyed through a world organization which is, itself, sovereign, which establishes a system of economic cooperation, which interprets the democratic and eternal yearning for freedom not in terms of the limits of a nation, but in terms of the whole world. Locke, therefore, is to be commended for proclaiming that government should seek the well-being of all mankind (for this is an implicit prophecy of a world order); his capitalistic economy (as will be argued later) is no longer to be endured, since it is one cause of war; yet, so long as the world continues in





its war-culminating pathways, his point must be conceded that the struggle for freedom against tyranny will naturally, inevitably, and rightly bring some peoples to arms in defense of their freedom. In fact, as Dickinson S.

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Miller has asserted in connection with his criticism of the late Prime Minister Chamberlain's policy, to refrain from the use of force in certain historical situations is one of the most grievous errors governments can make. That which can cancel the argument of Locke, therefore, is nothing short of intelligent planning and co-operation under a common sovereign, which makes impossible numerous contradictory and conflicting sovereigns in a world that is essentially one, which thereby diminishes narrow national spirit and narrow, national self-interest, and which grounds the economic life of the world in a fundamental principle of rational cooperation and good will. It is by no means the thesis of this paper that this great sovereign organization will necessarily soon come into existence and function successfully; it is, simply, that, until it or its equivalent does come to birth, Locke's thesis of the natural and warranted recourse to force will continue to hold.

6. Tolerance, minorities, and social freedom.

a. Exposition.

Locke's specific theory of religious tolerance,

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58. Boston University Philosophical Club banquet, April 15, 1942.





indicative of his general attitude toward tolerance, is suggested by the unequivocating words: "Absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty, is the thing that we stand in need of."<sup>59</sup> Tolerance among churches

is indispensable, for it is "the chief characteristic<sup>60</sup> mark of the true church." Tolerance of the church by the state is natural and right since Christ

instituted no commonwealth, he prescribed unto his followers no new and peculiar form of government; nor put he the sword into any magistrate's hand with commission to make use of it in forcing men to forsake their former religion, and receive his.<sup>61</sup>

More precisely stated, Locke's theory of religious tolerance rests on the following thesis: (1) All persons in a commonwealth should be free to join themselves to any religious society they choose--since religious societies exist only for the saving of souls and for worship<sup>62</sup> and since each person, not the state, is responsible for his own soul's salvation. (2) Each society should, therefore, since it concerns not civil affairs, be free to govern itself so long as it does not disobey what has been decreed by civil law.<sup>63</sup> (3) Neither the state, then, nor any church, should seek to coerce persons, by force, by<sup>64</sup>

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59. T, I, 4.

60. T, I, 5.

61. T, I, 38; cf. Locke, Art.(1669), 194.

62. Cf. T, I, 30, 33, 54, 55.

63. T, I, 33, 34.

64. T, III, 435.





confiscation, or by threat to any other civil liberty, into  
 a religious fellowship which he does not freely choose--  
 for his salvation can never be secured by force but only  
 by the persuasion of love and his free choice, and since  
 the use of force, in religious matters, is wholly contrary  
 to the New Testament;<sup>68</sup> (4) Since the civil government is  
 of and for all of the people, no priesthood should be per-  
 mitted to assume power in civil affairs.<sup>69</sup> (5) If a Chris-  
 tian's conscience conflicts with the civil law, he should  
 disobey the government. "Obedience is due in the first  
 place to God and afterwards to the laws."<sup>70</sup> One should care  
 for his own soul first and next for the public peace;<sup>71</sup>  
 but, even so, the civil law must be enforced and the dis-  
 obedient person must be punished, "For the private judgment  
 of any person concerning a law enacted in political matters,  
 for the public good, does not take away the obligation of  
 that law, nor deserve a dispensation."<sup>72</sup> (6) "Those that  
 will not own and teach the duty of tolerating all men in  
 matters of mere religion" are, themselves, not to be  
 tolerated.

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65. T, I, 35.

66. T, II, 68.

67. T, I, 7-9.

68. T, I, 15-16.

69. T, I, 46; cf. 21.

70. T, I, 43.

71. T, I, 44.

72. T, I, 43; neither overt acts, then, nor even opinions  
 contrary to government are to be tolerated (cf. T, I,  
 45; cited by Graham, EPP, 79).





For what do all these and the like doctrines signify, but that they may, and are ready upon any occasion to seize the government, and possess themselves of the estates and fortunes of their fellow-subjects; and that they only ask leave to be tolerated by the magistrates so long, until they find themselves strong enough to effect it.<sup>73</sup>

The law of toleration (should be) that all churches.....lay down toleration as the foundation of their own liberty, and teach that liberty of conscience is every man's natural right, equally belonging to dissenters as to themselves; and that nobody ought to be compelled in matters of religion either by law or force.<sup>74</sup>

(7) Again,

those are not at all to be tolerated who deny the being of God. Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist.<sup>75</sup>

#### b. Criticism.

Locke's thesis in his discussion of religious tolerance (and, presumably, it suggests the principles of his theory of tolerance in general) is simply this, that no person and no persons of a society should be made to suffer the loss of any of their civil rights and privileges because of religious opinions and practices, and no person or persons should be compelled by law or force to adhere to any religion but should be left absolutely free to choose any one or more--so long, at least, as he believes in God, espouses tolerance of others, and does not conflict, in

<sup>73</sup>. T, I, 46.

<sup>74</sup>. T, I, 47.

<sup>75</sup>. T, I, 41.





overt act or expressed opinion, with the laws of the state.

(1) The first comment to be made of this view, then, is this, that Locke's argument for refusing to tolerate atheists is in fact, unwarranted and untenable. Though men do take civil oaths in the name of God, it is not his name, it is rather civil law and its force (as Locke himself asserts in other contexts, especially in his theory concerning force) that compels him to comply with the pledges he makes as a citizen of a state. Man's fear of God's wrath is not essential to the preserving of the bonds that hold a state together. Were there no God at all, men's moral consciousness alone might enforce such oaths. And where this fails, the force of the state itself would compel men to fulfill their civil pledges. Though a wise belief in God would be a reasonable, desirable, and beneficial mark of mankind, contrary to Locke's theory, the state itself is not grounded upon it; so that the stability of civil life is not fundamentally affected by what individuals believe about the ultimate nature of things, and the question is not seriously related to matters of tolerance in general.

(2) In the context of his thought and the conceptions of his day, Locke's view concerning sovereignty of churches and states was sound and adequate. Locke affirmed that the church had to do with the saving of souls for eternity while the state had to do with the temporal affairs of men. Almost





entirely, then, conflict should be avoidable, if only each group stayed within its realm. So Locke argued rightly that the sovereignty of a church belonged to the members who freely joined it; no external power should seek to influence it in any way; for its affairs were entirely its own. Likewise, no church, as a church, should seek to control civil affairs, for civil sovereignty belonged no more to the church organization than church sovereignty belonged to the civil society; civil sovereignty belonged, rather, to all members of the state no matter what their church affiliation, or lack of it, might be. It therefore followed that churches should be tolerated so long as they did not oppose the civil government. If a church or a person, for conscience's sake felt constrained to oppose the state, according to Locke, he should by all means do it, since God is to be served before the civil laws; but he should do it with the consciousness that the state must justly punish him, since the laws of the state are to be cancelled by the private will of no man.

Now so long as Locke favored the intolerance of atheists and so long as the separate jurisdictions of the church and state were clear, Locke's theory presented, for today, no great difficulties. Clearly, and contrary to Locke, atheists are to be tolerated as much as any persons. Clearly, the church and the state should exercise sovereignty in their own distinct areas.





(3) The question of tolerance becomes contemporaneously critical,, however, and, in democratic societies, crucial, only when the churches or any other persons or societies seek to make their weight felt against existing condition, that is, seek to press forward theories and practices which are in conflict with the laws of the state which embody the majority will. Such contrary purposes may express themselves in thought and words or in overt acts.

Locke's own writings on social affairs make it clear that he believed in freedom of expression, with limitations. But he believed that such tolerance and freedom were merited only by the tolerant. It is not difficult to comprehend the reason for such a position. After all, tolerance, in one sense, is a right which has its collateral duty; on this basis, only he who fulfills his obligations to tolerate others fully merits the privilege of being tolerated in his thoughts and words and all those of his acts which are not contrary to democratically established law.

(a) Yet the problem of tolerance goes deeper than the question of rights merited through acceptance of equivalent obligations. It involves the sanctity of man's reason and conscience, the independence of a man's soul, the impossibility of human authority determining absolute truth, and the danger to the possibility of progress on any principle of any intolerance. For one decisive reason in particular which undergirds democracy itself, then, and contrary





to Locke, even the intolerant must be tolerated--so long as their intolerance takes expression in thought and word, but not in overt acts. That reason is this, that the principle of intolerance of the intolerant obviously defeats itself. If intolerance of intolerance were a basic democratic principle, then tolerance, itself, would vanish from democracy, and democracy would disappear. The paradox of democracy is that to sustain itself, it must permit all opinions to be expressed--even to opinion of intolerance, which, should it triumph, would destroy democracy. For if the sanctity of conscience is despoiled, even the consciences of the intolerant--since even intolerant persons may be intolerant on rational and conscientious grounds, democracy is destroyed. It is destroyed, not only because conscientious persons who believe in intolerance are prohibited free speech, but because the so-called democrats, themselves, actually practice intolerance. So, contrary to Locke, even the intolerant must be tolerated in thought and word and influence, but not in overt act.

But the objection is reiterated: If even the intolerant are tolerated, then, again, tolerance itself is endangered, for, in time, intolerance may come to dominant power. It must, therefore, not be tolerated. Locke holds this view. To this the answer must be: Intolerance, on democratic terms, should come to dominate if it is desired by a sufficiently large (a majority) number of citizens; and it cannot have this democratic opportunity for success





unless it is tolerated. Yet, contrary to Locke, it cannot come to power on the wings of force unless it acquires overwhelming support (doubtless far more than majority support); for governments in power rightfully and naturally squelch all signs of unlawful force so long as they are able--which means, so long as the opposing force has not taken on overwhelming proportions. When it has attained the support of the vast mass of citizens, intolerance should dominate anyway on the principle of majority rule.

(b) But while the only adequate democratic principle is toleration of all forms of criticism of established government as well as those who advocate intolerance of laws or groups or persons, or even advocate the use of force to establish what they believe to be a much needed reform or replacement of an inadequate government (with exceptional restrictions during wartime and responsibility for libel and the like), it must not tolerate any overt acts against the laws which have been decreed by the democratic expression of the majority will.

But again it is objected: To permit propaganda for a cause contrary to the established government is to encourage its overthrow. Why not, then, for example, permit the use of force, if it is permissible to advocate it? And the answer is this: Free speech is the foundation of democracy; but so is the principle of rule by ballots





rather than bullets. If, by the exercise of free speech, a majority of persons can be persuaded to desire the intolerance of a group or the change of government by violent overthrow, then, unfortunately, but necessarily, intolerance of that group actually becomes lawful in obedience to the principle of majority rule. If the desire for change by force is necessary, is fostered to the extent that it actually threatens the existent government, then, on democratic terms (since that force must be tremendous to threaten a government which has permitted only freedom of speech, not overt acts), force should not be necessary; the majority will, which such a threat of force would imply, would, on democratic terms, warrant a change of government. And, if, when warranted, that change were not made, then violence would be justified anyway. (It is of striking significance that the freedom of speech and writing practiced by the French in the eighteenth century, by its philosophers, pamphleteers and politicians, was an important factor in bringing about the attack on France's injustices.) So it becomes clearer that tolerance for all ideas and expressions of speech and pen are essential to democracy whereas overt disobedience of established laws cannot be permitted.

For, in a democracy, the enforcement of the laws is the backbone and basis of its continued existence, the only safeguard against tyranny and anarchy. It is at this





point that Locke gets directly and soundly at the heart of the matter. Moral conscience may demand overt disobedience to civil law; then conscience must, by all means, be obeyed, since conscience is prior to law. Yet at the same time, conscientious disobeyers of civil law must be punished for their disobedience, for the private opinion of no man (though, contrary to Locke, it must for all persons be permitted unmolested expression and propogation) must never be permitted to cancel the laws which root in the majority will. The conscientious objector, if he is a believer in democracy, should see that a society which permits him to propogate his views short of overt disobedience to the laws is equally justified in, and has, in fact, the unswerving responsibility, as Locke wisely mentions, when the welfare of society is at stake, of prosecuting all breakers of the law, though they break them for conscience's sake.

(c) These two principles of absolute tolerance of thought and speech and of the enforcement of laws for the protection and well-being of a democratic society are clarified by the recent court decisions concerning Jehovah's Witnesses. According to the view proposed here, the court was undermining democracy when it prohibited the sale of Witness literature; it was, in principle, upholding democracy when it insisted that all citizens, under the law of the state, must salute the flag or take the consequences.





(d) But if a democracy is to attain its high possibilities, then even deeper than these two collateral principles of free government must lie an attitude which pervades the state's citizens almost in entirety. As Professor L. Harold De Wolf recently said, with reference to Rousseau, this attitude is that of common good will and cooperation toward the greatest well-being of all; it is the will to see beyond private and party interest to the welfare of the whole and all its parts. Though Locke seeks just this, his theory of majority rule is not characterized by this consideration. Yet this is the root principle of democracy, that the majority govern, but that, in enacting legislation, the majority have an eye to the desires of the minorities and that they not only safeguard the basic structure of government, which exiles anarchy and tyranny and provides order, but enact every law with the greatest possible consideration for minority interests. An excellent example of this spirit in action (and an illustration of the attitude that has stabilized democracy in the United States) is the contemporary, federal, provision that conscientious objectors to war on religious grounds be relieved of the otherwise, and otherwise necessarily, universal obligation to defend the state in time of war. In

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76. In a conversation at Boston University School of Theology, Feb. 17, 1943.





this practical situation, it might have been feasible for the majority will to concede even more to the interests of conscience; then, again, it might not. But the supreme task and dominant characteristic of democratic peoples is their seeking and their finding, in a spirit of imagination, sympathy, and mutual respect for persons and for conscience, the best possible solution to the dilemma caused by man's enigma of being a creature of two worlds, the world of his self and that of his society.

(e) This task, this attitude, this will to see beyond majority and minority interests to the greatest possible well-being and liberty of all in spite of conflicts in opinion and desire, this, the indispensable of ideal government, rests on indispensables in the natures of the men who constitute that government. Those indispensables are a good measure of reason and disciplined wills; reason which enables men to understand the true, organic, necessarily cooperative, nature of democratic life, and wills disciplined to submerge narrow self-interest to the well-being of the whole.

It is relevant to note here (though these matters have already been dealt with in detail) that Locke, the apostle of democracy, though he failed to characterize the principle of majority rule with the possession of any eye for minority concerns, presupposed, for one thing, reason in man, and,





for another, the Christian morality, the morality of self-sacrifice and discipline. It is also relevant to acknowledge the probably valid suggestion of Professor De Wolf, substantiating half of this thesis, namely, that the success of democracy in England and America may partly be explained by this very fact, that the soil from which it sprang was rich with a rigorous religious tradition which fostered the development of moral self-discipline.

Locke's view of tolerance, then, though commendable in the main, is to be criticized, because it contains within itself the seed of intolerance and the partial cancellation of democracy, since it excludes the toleration of the intolerant and atheists. He is further to be criticized because of the fact that, though his theory of man includes what man requires for the democratic handling of majority--minority relations in the interest of the greatest well-being of all, that is, though he presupposes in man both the possibilities of reason and a morality of self-discipline, he fails to consider the will of the majority in its all-important and essentially democratic aspect of giving all possible (that is, that which is compatible with the security of the foundations and structures of democratic government) consideration to the peculiar desires and special concerns of minority groups.





(4) One other remark which grows out of Locke's discussion of tolerance remains to be made. It is this, that Locke discerned, among other important marks, an indispensable principle of democracy when he discerned the importance of the complete separation of church and state. But they should be separate for a reason which Locke does not sufficiently recognize. He argues that they should be separate because they deal with different areas of man's concern--one temporal, the other spiritual. He argues that they should be separate because each is freely joined or consented to by its members; therefore, in each area, government should be administered only by those who are members of the society. But he does not see sufficiently, if at all (and perhaps it was due to the temper of his time and the contemporary emphasis of religion on personal salvation being conceived essentially in terms of eternal bliss beyond this world), that the church must be separate from the state in order that, in its now generally recognized temporal mission and role, it may, without financial or political hindrance or control, hold aloft the standards of Christ in their temporal and social, as well as eternal and individual, significance, and freely criticize the society, of which it is a part, even the civil government of the time and place in which it exists.





## 7. Social freedom and the institution of slavery.

### a. Exposition.

Though, essentially, Locke ardently denies the institution of human slavery ("Slavery is so vile and miserable an estate of man.....that it is hardly to be conceived, that an 'Englishman,' much less a 'gentlemen,'<sup>77</sup> should plead for it."), he, nevertheless, conditionally condones it. If, for example, a man or a group of men are taken captive in a just war (that is, a war in which a people is unjustly attacked) by those who are unjustly attacked, the captives, "by the right of nature," may be "subjected to the absolute dominion and arbitrary power<sup>78</sup> of their masters." Since they might have been put to death at the first, they may justly be enslaved ever afterwards, "it being clear that that is less than death, and death being available at any time if he refuses the<sup>79</sup> will of his master."

### b. Criticism.

(1) Man's conscience has, in general, advanced so far by now that, though man may not always heed his conscience, almost every normal civilized person will be able to understand and, if he is honest and objective, will acknowledge, that it is no longer necessary even to

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77. Gov., I, 1.

78. Gov., II, 85.

79. Gov., II





argue the unnaturalness, inhumanity, utter injustice of slavery. Conscience and reason plainly testify to that fact. Yet it is not unprofitable to note how Locke's view of slavery stands in relation to the history of social thought, and how his own approval of slavery, conditional though it is, is to be explained.

(2) In clear relation to Locke's view is Plato's, which accepts slavery as a natural thing; Aristotle's, which holds that slavery is not only right but expedient on the grounds that, since rationality is the mark of personality and some human beings do not possess rationality to a degree much above the animals, they are not persons but, like animals, property--yes, says Aristotle, as southerners argued of old, it is by the grace and goodness of rational men that the nonrational are given  
80  
the saving blessing of slavery; Hobbes's view, which disapproves slavery; Rousseau's, which bluntly affirms that  
81  
slavery is never right; and Hegel's, which, hinting of Aristotle's, holds that some men are not full persons, yet are valuable, and that therefore, though one can scarcely say that slavery is right, he may condone it.

(3) In criticism of Locke's partial surrender to slavery as a right under the condition of just conquest, this must be said. Two fundamental principles acknowledged

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80. Pol., 1254a.

81. SC, 13.





by Locke come into conflict. The more basic one is that of the equality and worth as ends in themselves of all mankind; the less basic, and yet the one which Locke chooses to count most important here, is man's right by nature to oppose and punish, to the degree proportionate to the crime, those who encroach on the rights of others. Locke's view of slavery, therefore, must be judged consistent with the principle from which he chooses to infer his conclusion, the principle of punishment; but as nevertheless unsound, and inconsistent with his own truest thought, his most fundamental principle, which roots, above all else, in the dignity and equality of men as free and rational persons. Locke's slip in thought here is further emphasized by the fact that at another place he expresses a principle which might definitely have encouraged him to let go the principle of punishment and hold fast the principle of the equality of men; for in another context he says that when men's crimes do not injure individuals or society, even the guilty are not to be punished. He might reasonably have gone further and acknowledged the fact that, though men's crimes or intentions are at one time destructive to individual and social welfare (insurrection or conquest), when restrained and reflected on, and repented of, they may cease to be destructive. He might reasonably have concluded, that the time might come, not through charity merely, but rightly, when the captives should be set





entirely free again. Locke's view of slavery is internally inconsistent with his own deepest insight and externally inconsistent with its equivalent, the high, Christian, democratic conception of man.

## 8. Social freedom and Locke's economic theory.

### a. Exposition.

By definition, when Locke uses the term property, he means "lives, liberties, and estates."<sup>82</sup> "By property I must be understood to mean that property which men have in their persons as well as goods."<sup>83</sup> Yet in his discourse on property, what he is referring to, essentially, is the material possessions which are commonly called property today. His general theory may be understood in terms of God, labor, capacity for use, and imperishable possessions. Locke begins by acknowledging that both natural reason and revelation show that God has given the earth "to mankind in common."<sup>84</sup> But immediately he adds that, in the light of this and in spite of this, what man "hath mixed his labour with" is his own.<sup>85</sup> It is, in fact, this mixing of what is his own, with what God freely gives to all, that gives man ownership of that which is altered and increased by the work of his hands.<sup>85</sup> Really, says Locke, there is scarcely any other

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82. Gov., II, 123.

83. Gov., II, 173.

84. Gov., II, 25.

85. Gov., II, 27.





grounds on which a man can claim to own any material thing. "It is labour.....which puts the greatest part of the value upon land, without which it would scarcely be worth any thing."<sup>86</sup> "It is labour indeed that put the difference of value on every thing." "Nine-tenths" "of the products of the earth useful to the life of man" "are the effects of labour: nay, .....in most of them ninety-nine hundredths<sup>87</sup> are wholly to be put in the account of labour." Therefore, what a man works on is his own, so long as no one, on the same grounds has claimed it before him.

Yet, according to nature, all men must have enough and no man may own more than he can use; if he permits anything to perish, he commits a crime against society, and, if he<sup>88</sup> permits any man to perish in need, he commits a sin. But, on the consent of society, men may nevertheless be worth a great deal, as worth is measured in terms of universally accepted, but not originally natural, standards of money, gold, jewels. If he can exchange perishable for durable<sup>89</sup> goods, there seems to be no limit to what he may rightfully possess. So unlimited possessions are legitimate; but they<sup>90</sup> are legitimate not by nature but by consent of the people.

The essence of Locke's economic theory, then, seems

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86. Gov., II, 43.

87. Gov., II, 40.

88. Gov., II, 31 and Gov., I, 42.

89. Cf. Locke, Gov., II, 46-50.

90. Gov., II, 36; cf. 32.





to be this, that the wealth of the earth, by nature, belongs to mankind in common, that all men, therefore, must have at least an adequate share of the necessities of life, but that by labor, which is the warrant of possession, by exchange of perishable for durable goods, including land, and under government, by the consent of society, men may come rightly to own unlimited private property.

#### b. Criticism.

(1) The possible adequacy of Locke's theory for his day.

Now, despite the support of communism by the Puritans<sup>91</sup> in Locke's day, it is clear that Locke believed that, under contemporary economic conditions, his essentially capitalistic theory of economic life was the most adequate one. In fact, it is not improbable, as Bastide suggests, that, in his "vigoureuse défense de la propriété.....Locke se rappelait les theories communistes des puritains extrêmes et croignait encore le caprice et la convoitise des querelleurs et des disputeurs."<sup>91</sup>

Not only did Locke believe the system of unlimited private property,<sup>92</sup> its protection by government, and free business enterprise (He spoke innocently of an "overplus, gold and silver, which may be hoarded up without injury to any

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91. Bastide, JLTP, 231: quote within quote comes from Locke,

92. Cf. Gov., II, 36.

92. Gov., II, 36.





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one; but little did he realize the injurious power of wealth in the organic society of today.) to be the economic system which best safeguarded man's natural rights and freedom, but, in his day, he may have been right. That system may well have contributed to the enrichment of mankind more than any other system could have. With the riches of vast untapped reservoirs to be developed, with world commerce just beginning to recognize its possibilities, with modern industry just coming to birth, with the need that there was, therefore, for the complete dedication, of the capable few, to the task of developing these great possibilities, it is not improbable that, for all mankind, it was well for capitalism to have that day. It is not, therefore, difficult to understand why Locke counted that system the one which best served the cause of freedom; it allowed, from a private point of view, a maximum of individual freedom which, from a social point of view, may not have been significantly endangered or diminished by the economic forces which in subsequent centuries have gathered tremendous power and have come to be concentrated (as a result of that freedom of enterprise) in the hands of a few and have enabled them to control and exploit the masses for the benefit of the few. Locke, therefore, is not to be hastily condemned for his judgment favoring the capitalistic

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93. Gov., II, 50; cf. Locke, IM, 5, where he supports unlimited interest on loans as encouraging free trade and even working in favor of the comparatively poor people.





system, so far as his contemporary situation enabled him to judge, as the most effective in maintaining the freedom, and enriching the life of, man.

(2) The clear inadequacy of his specific economic theory for today.

It must be affirmed at the outset, that Locke's economic theory, especially his theory of property, is not wholly inadequate or useless today. It is the thesis of this study that the limited ownership of private property, even of land, for private use, not for production, for commerce, is indispensable to the fullest development of personality and the richest consciousness of social freedom.

(a) But it must be insisted, without reservation, that unlimited private ownership for private use and commercial production and exchange is now no longer compatible with the essential principles of democracy. For unrestrained enterprise has come, in this day, and under the organic economic and industrial conditions of modern society, which are controlled by a few, to spell slavery for the masses, not freedom, even though men possessing economic power do not necessarily desire exploitation. As Laski notes: Because of technological changes, specialization, concentration, interdependence, "the principle of individual freedom in the economic realm" has come to operate in such a fashion as "to deny to the masses the benefits democracy





94  
 was supposed to secure." And it has become clear that,  
 though Locke did not see it, "property, which<sup>95</sup> is a type of  
 power, may or may not be liberating." Adequately shared,  
 it is liberating; controlled by a few, it is enslaving.  
 For their control of the means of production, which follows  
 from their control of property, gives them control over  
 millions of people whom they have never even known; and that  
 power they are sometimes unwilling, sometimes unable, to  
 96  
 use for the public good.

(b) It is with this insight in mind that Henry George  
 defends the thesis, in his Progress and Poverty, that land,  
 as the source of all wealth, should not be privately owned.  
 Explicitly he states it:

Political liberty, when the equal right to  
 land is denied, becomes, as population in-  
 creases and invention goes on, merely the  
 liberty to compete for employment at starva-  
 tion wages.....and poverty enslaves men whom  
we boast are political sovereigns..... 97

Herbert Spencer holds a similar view; a view which  
 sharply opposes, and soundly opposes, Locke's approval  
 of vast private ownership in land. Now, let it be re-  
 iterated, this study sustains the thesis that limited land  
 ownership for use is desirable for democracies; but the

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94. Laski, SF, 124.

95. Schneider, Art. (1940), 661.

96. Carl Becker, MD, 55-56; quoted by Laski, SF, 125.

97. George, PP, II, 542.





essential thesis of George and Spencer is sound, namely, that private ownership of vast land areas and of the natural resources of the earth is one of the gravest injustices man has been guilty of, since it involves grossly unfair distribution and fosters exploitation and economic slavery. It is as George says:

In allowing one man to own the land on which and from which other men must live, we have made them his bondsmen in a degree which increases as material progress goes on..... extracting from the masses in every civilized country the fruits of their weary toil; that is instituting a harder and more hopeless slavery in place of that which has been destroyed.....<sup>98</sup>

Because land is "the source of all wealth and the field of  
<sup>99</sup>  
 all labor," this paper maintains not that all land must be owned in common, but that private ownership must be limited to that which can be reasonably used in private life, and that all land productive on a large scale and all significant natural resources must be owned in common if the real freedom of man is to be secured.

(c) As has already been suggested in the discussion of the place of force in the maintenance of social freedom, Locke's capitalistic economic theory is inadequate because in this modern world, so organically constituted and inseparably related in the major parts of its economic,

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98. George, PP, 1545-546.

99. George, PP, II, 326 ff.





as well as other, activities, free enterprize, cut-throat competition between the capitalistic interests of the various nations, is one of the most potent factors contributing to the recurrence of wars. Not only, then, does capitalism lead to the loss of freedom through the exploitation of the masses within nations; it also leads to the loss of freedom through the subjugation of whole nations to other nations' selfish pursuit of wealth; and, in the conflict between self-seeking, capitalistic nations of comparable military power, it leads to long, devastating wars, in which millions of the lives of the masses are lost while capitalistic interests increase their wealth.

(3) The type of social organization now necessary if real social freedom is to be secured.

It is now quite clear that capitalism as a form of economic organization, even though existing in conjunction with political democracy, does not secure, in the modern world, the ends that democracy seeks. As circumstances have changed, the need of a new form of organization to secure the ideals of democracy has become apparent. <sup>100</sup> The end of freedom, no longer secure under capitalism, must be sought in a different way. In place of industrial dictatorship, ruthless competition, subjugation of the masses, must

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100. Cf. Bastide, JLTP, 253, and Ulich, Lec. at Boston University Philosophical Club, 2/3/43; cf. also Clapp, Art.(1943), 89, n. 10.





come industrial democracy, cooperation for the well-being of all, the participation of the masses in assuring the sane and cooperative distribution of the wealth of the earth. It is not the purpose of this study to give a detailed exposition of the precise form that that new organization of national and international economic life must take; it is simply asserted that, in it, greed must be supplanted by good will, and ruthless individualism must be succeeded by cooperative planning.

Now this is a difficult and dangerous task. It is so because the organization of a planned economic system requires persons who plan and requires safeguards against the planners' usurpation of power and betrayal of their trust. For under a planned economic society, if those in positions of responsibility and power betray their trust, they have at their disposal all the forces of economic life with which to subjugate the masses to a new slavery, not only economic, but cultural, too.

The new organization, then, must not only provide for a planned economic order, but, also, for democratic means of controlling that order. With a planned economy, must be coordinated a free cultural society. Such a socialistic order of life requires, as Mulford Sibley has said, "a well thought-out scheme for the extension of the machinery of





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democratic control to all areas." This is an exceedingly difficult task; but it is essential, in this period of history, to the preservation of the social freedom and security of man.

(4) Permanent elements of freedom in Locke's political-economic theory.

One may, if he will, insist that Locke's fundamental purpose in his social theorizing was to defend the capitalistic system for the welfare of the strong, that his expositions were not inquiries concerning truth and justice but, rather, attempts to justify special privilege under the cloak of the name of freedom, that the eternal protection of unlimited private property, not the greatest possible freedom for all men, was the primary purpose of his political theory.

But according to his writings, this seems to be the soundest interpretation: Locke earnestly desired the recognition of man's dignity as a person and the preservation of man's freedom, and believed, much as Hegel later did, that that personality was symbolized and that freedom, real in social relations, as one's possessions, were protected from tyrannical confiscation or threat by his neighbors. Therefore, for Locke, that government which existed to maintain

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101. Sibley, Art. (1942), 4.

102. Gov., II, 222, 91.





man's freedom and safeguard his natural rights existed necessarily to protect his property. If Locke really meant, then, what his writings say, and was not merely seeking to justify the selfish accumulation of wealth by the few regardless of its detrimental consequences to the many and the destruction of their natural rights and freedom, Locke's principles of government are to be seen as more fundamental than the specific economic system in which he believed, in his day, they found their best expression.

Now if this is the soundest interpretation of Locke's purpose and writings, then his political theory, though it, in one sense (its defense of unlimited private property), is a document of only temporary validity, is, in another sense (its defense of freedom and justice), a document of (what, by contrast, might be termed) enduring validity. In the light of this interpretation of Locke's theory of political and economic freedom (though this interpretation has not yet been widely comprehended), it will now be suggested in more detail, what the elements in Locke's theory are which transcend any particular type of economic system and make it, in its fundamental principles, applicable to the changing needs of a changing world and compatible with any economic system which, in any generation or century, is

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103. Gov., I, 92; Gov., II, 85.





actually best able to establish and maintain man's social freedom and the preservation of his natural rights as a man. Several of these enduring principles of Locke, which transcend any exclusive system of economic life and make his basic theory of social freedom able to transcend capitalism and be compatible even with socialism, are the following:

(a) God gave the earth to mankind in common.

(b) In bold statements, already quoted in the exposition of Locke's economic views, Locke makes it unmistakably clear that almost all of the value of anything (nine-tenths to ninety-nine hundredths) is to be credited to the account of labor. <sup>104</sup> Here Locke not only implies the possibility of his lending logical support to socialism; he is actually stating a socialistic principle even before the days of <sup>105</sup> its greatest prophets. It is, in truth, as Gooch and Corwin see, that:

Here in ovo is the labor theory of value of modern Socialism. In short, though it has always been regarded as the gospel par excellence of individualism, and indeed of proprietarian individualism, the Second Treatise on Government contains many of the ingredients of a very different interpretation of the doctrine of Natural Law. <sup>106</sup>

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104. Gov., II, 40.

105. Gooch, EDI, 358.

106. Corwin, Art. (1940), 96-97.





(c) Democratic socialism is further compatible with principles of Locke. For he holds that private ownership of property is justified, in nature, only by one's mixing of his labor with it. And that same law of nature which supports ownership on the basis of labor (thus, together with Locke's theory of value, implying that the laborer should receive almost in entirety the fruits of his labors) also clearly indicates that one should own only that which he can use; to allow anything to perish or to refuse to share with one in need is a crime. By the law of nature, then (and according to Locke, government must always respect it), private possession and ownership of property are rigorously limited. It is only by consent, by expression of the majority will, that unlimited private property can rightly be possessed and owned. Even if, then, by the law of nature, it were not just for property to be rigorously limited (though as a matter of fact this is more fundamental than the principle of consent), then, if the majority willed it, if the majority consented to it, private property could rightly be limited or even abolished. So on Locke's principles, nature not only moves toward socialism but the principle of consent always implies its possibility.

(d) The public good is always, for Locke, a more fundamental principle even than the protection of private property





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as the end of government. In fact, government exists for the public good; and private property is protected because it is deemed an essential means to that end. But more consistent today with such an end, as suggested by the thesis of the socialists, is, at least, the limitation, perhaps the abolition of private ownership of property which leads to the enslavement of men. Despite the fact, then, that Locke persistently argues that government exists to protect unlimited ownership of private property (though he, himself, affirms that "natural reason.....tells us that men, being once born, have a right to their preservation and consequently meat and drink, and such other things as nature affords for their substance."), he might, as a logical inference from his most basic principle of the public good, have argued, if he lived in such a historical situation as today's, for the limitation or abolition of private property in the interest of the well-being of all mankind. And he would have found grounds for that argument not only in that principle but in his theories of the law of nature, consent, and majority rule. Despite his own practical application of his principles in favor of a capitalistic economy, then, and despite the potent manner in which his theory helped to shape history in that direction, Locke is not exclusively

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107. Gov., II, 37.

108. Gov., II, 25; cf. Gov., II, 36.





or necessarily the eternal father of capitalism but is, as judged by his fundamental principles, equally (and in today's historical circumstances more fundamentally) a prophet of a kind of socialism or whatever form of political-economic organization actually safeguards human freedom, in fact, and most effectively serves the public good.

If this thesis cannot be maintained, then it must be conceded that, in the organically constituted world society of today, Locke's economic theory is essentially undemocratic and, as such, is destructive of the ends Locke claimed to seek, the real social freedom and the realized dignity of man.

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For, as Henry George has said:

It is not enough that men should vote, it is not enough that they should be theoretically equal before the law. They must have liberty to avail themselves of the opportunities and means of life; they must stand on equal terms with reference to the bounties of nature. Either this, or Liberty withdraws her light.

#### 9. Summary of Locke's theory of social freedom.

This, then, in summary, is Locke's conception of social freedom. Because man is free by nature, by birth, as a possessor of reason and free will, as created in the image of God, and as of greater worth than the whole world, man freely consents, commonly contracts, to membership in a freely organized society which is governed by the free will of the majority in the interest of the greatest possible well-being





of all. Because men are free persons, society must exist only to enlarge and secure that freedom against the unlawful and tyrannical domination of those who heed not the law of reason, the law which admonishes the preservation of all mankind. This freedom preserving society must, therefore, be constituted by members who seek not only self-interest but the interest of all, who believe in God, whose consent and oath, therefore, are trustworthy, and who freely tolerate others. That society must be ruled by the will of the majority, and that majority and its laws must be the seat of sovereignty. Its government must consist of at least two strong branches, legislative and executive, the latter possessing power of prerogative and the use of force to execute laws and defend the state against invasion; but, under certain circumstances, subjects may exercise force, too, to defend their freedom against the injustices of rulers. Among the freedoms of society must stand freedom of religions so long as that freedom does not include the believer's disobeying of the established civil laws. Slavery is essentially to be despised and prohibited; but society is to protect the private ownership of unlimited property against fellow citizens, against rulers, and against foreign invasion.

Summarily stated, these conclusions were reached:  
 Locke's conception of man and of social ends and means





actually transcends the Essay's deterministic, hedonistic view of man, the transcending elements apparently being derived from Locke's Christian faith and conviction; for his inconsistency he is to be censored but for his broadening of his conception of man and society he is to be commended. He is wrong in holding that belief in God is essential to citizen's oaths but right in affirming the indispensability of force for the maintenance of governments. Locke's theory of consent, explicit and tacit, is ethically sound and grounded in the laws of reason or nature, the content of which is essentially Christian. His balanced governmental organization, consisting of legislative and executive branches, rests on an indispensable insight; but, as thus far has been only intimated, that insight was not completely developed by Locke. To the executive and legislative branches was to be added, in the political theories of  
110  
Montesquieu and in the government of the United States, the equally authoritative judiciary. It was further maintained that Locke's theory of the place of force in the defense of freedom and security is essentially sound. But his view of tolerance was criticized in spite of its great liberating influence and its recognition of the necessity of enforcing civil laws for the good of all, because it did not

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110. Cf. Fletcher, MEP, 136.





approve toleration for atheists or the intolerant; Locke was further criticized because, though his theory presupposed man's possession of reason and a capacity for moral discipline, it failed to consider adequately the place of minorities in a system of majority rule. His theory of conditional slavery was seen to be grounded on a minor premise and inconsistent with his major, namely, his Christian view of man and it was further seen to be wholly untenable on any grounds. It was concluded that his economic theory, if adequate for his own day, was now no longer sufficient for the needs of a world organically one, in which the possession of economic power by a few spelled slavery, or death in war, for the many. But it was also suggested that Locke's social principles in general (the law of nature, the idea of consent, the public good, the labor theory of value, and the like) were compatible with a democratically planned and controlled economy, or any economic system which served the largest well-being of man.

Out of all this may be gleaned the further conclusions, namely, that Locke (as contrasted with Rousseau, for example, and in his emphasis on individuals) failed to stress enough the  
 111  
 organic aspect of political life and that he failed to affirm,

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111. Cf. Laski, PTE, 74.





explicitly, the modern idea that not only permanence, but development, in good measure, is a characteristic of social organization;<sup>112</sup> but that, nevertheless, his social theory, as contrasted, in method, with those of the French theorists, had the advantage of its rooting in the empirical data of actual political life and practical contemporary affairs<sup>113</sup> in England and that, whatever its inadequacies in detail or application, his theory not only "announced the advent of modern systems of parliamentary government" and left to subsequent thinkers the consideration mainly of "the conditions under which it is to work,"<sup>114</sup> but clarified for posterity certain fundamental and enduring political principles apart from which mankind's freedom can never be secure.

#### B. Locke's Influence on the French and American Revolutions.

The tracing of Locke's influence in social thought and history, or in other realms, too, would provide a more than sufficient task for a dissertation writer; to trace, authoritatively, Locke's influence on the French Revolution alone, for example, would seem almost an endless undertaking. Though that is not the essential purpose of this paper, yet because it suggests so well the power of Locke's life

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112. Cf. Laski, PTE, 75-76.

113. Tocqueville, SSF, 267.

114. Laski, PTE, 16.





and work, a brief intimation of that influence will be given here; and with it will be coupled, as well, a short survey of Locke's significance for the American Revolution. This discourse, in the light of remarks already made, should be understood as being suggestive rather than definitive; for it would be presumptuous, in a consideration incidental to the chief concern of this dissertation, to claim the last word on a subject on which the authorities, themselves, are not altogether agreed. But one thing is clear, namely, that<sup>115</sup> as Wagner observes:

The evolution of modern society depends..... not only on material circumstances and technological advance, but also on human aspirations and the counsels of philosophers.

and that this truth is clearly exemplified in Locke's impact on two great revolutions.

#### 1. Locke's influence on the French Revolution.

Even before Locke's death, he was not unknown on the Continent; he had spent time, as an exile, in Holland, and his first letter on toleration had been well received. Before the turn of the century, other men of literary activity had begun to spread his name abroad; among those who introduced Locke and other Englishmen to Europeans were Bayle,<sup>116</sup> Le Clerc and Basnage. This was the beginning of a current which was to flow far and wide throughout the eighteenth

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115. Wagner, SR, v.

116. Texte, JJR, 19, 26.

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century in France. Even by the year 1715, the political  
<sup>117</sup>  
 ideas of Locke were making their way. More than any other  
 English writers, even more than Newton, Locke's thought  
<sup>118</sup>  
 was holding French attention. And during that century,  
 Locke's teachings "obtained an authority which was but  
<sup>119</sup>  
 feebly disputed." It was not only his political, but, as  
 well, his metaphysical, ideas which became the fountain-  
<sup>120</sup>  
 head of French intellectual life. In general, these are  
 the conclusions at which investigators, have arrived; but  
 what were the avenues through which Locke's influence ex-  
 pressed itself?

Locke's influence moved through Montesquieu, Voltaire,  
 Rousseau, Diderot and the Encyclopaedists generally, Holbach  
 and Helvetius; in short, through the philosophers of the  
 century. It moved through the philosophers to the leaders  
 of the political Revolution, to Mirabeau, Desmoulins, Saint-  
 Just, but apparently, most of all, to Robespierre; though  
 it appears that some of these read Locke directly, too.  
 It moved through the philosophers and the political leaders  
 to the people; though it appears that even some of them read  
 Locke in translations. France felt his influence indi-  
 rectly, too, through the impact of the American Revolution  
 and the writings of Jefferson, both of which show the marks

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117. Texte, JJR, 20.

118. Texte, JJR, 77, 85-86; cf. Lecky, FR, 3.

119. Lowell, EFR, 243.

120. Lowell, EFR, 56.





of the molding hand of Locke, and both of which, especially the former, added fuel to the fire which one day was to flame in France.

But, turning to more specific details, what was the precise relationship of the leading thinkers of France to the master, Locke?

Montesquieu (1689-1755), for one, had spent two years in England, and the effect of that visit was apparent

<sup>121</sup> throughout his life. No doubt he read Locke while he was there; certainly he knew his works well, for, as Parelle

has said, "la pluport des principes que Montesquieu pose dans chapitre (the chapter on the English Constitution in Montesquieu's Spirit of the Laws) sont tirés du Traite du

Gouvernement civil, de Locke, ch. XII." <sup>122</sup> Montesquieu had, <sup>123</sup> in fact, "looked on England as the model state." And that was the England which Locke had in mind when he wrote his

political works. Though Montesquieu improved on insights

<sup>124</sup> of Locke, it appears quite clear that Locke's influence on Montesquieu was great.

Like Montesquieu, Voltaire (1694-1778), too, had lived <sup>125</sup> in England, and for almost three years. The influence of

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121. Lecky, FR, 3.

122. Parelle, OM, 265, n; cf. Fletcher, MEP, 20-21, and Lowell, EFR, 120.

123. Lowell, EFR, 332.

124. Fletcher, MEP, 136.

125. Lecky, FR, 3.





that visit on his thought was no less significant than the influence Montesquieu's visit had exerted on him. It is clear beyond the slightest doubt that Voltaire read Locke extensively and that he was greatly influenced by him. Especially did Voltaire stress freedom of expression and toleration in religion; and he was no less convinced, with Locke, of certain metaphysical theories.<sup>126</sup> That he esteemed Locke, apparently above all thinkers, is evident from his words:<sup>127</sup>

Après tant de courses malheureuses, fatigué, harassé, honteux d'avoir cherché tant de vérités, et d'avoir trouvé tant de chimères, je suis revenu à Locke, comme l'enfant prodigal qui retourne chez son père; je ne suis rejeté entre les bras d'un homme modeste, qui ne fient jamais de savoir ce qu'il ne sait pas; qui, à la vérité, ne possède pas des richesses immenses, mais dont les fonds sont bien assurés, et qui jouit du bien le plus solide sans aucune ostentation. Il ne confirme dans l'opinion que j'ai toujours eue, que rien n'entre dans notre entendement que par nos sens.....

He also says: "Jamais il ne fut peut-être un esprit plus sage,<sup>128</sup> plus methodique, un logicien plus exact que M. Locke."

Again he writes: "Je conviens, avec le sage Locke....."

And he speaks in the same place of "Locke, qui m'instruit,<sup>129</sup> et qui m'apprend à me défier de moi-même....."

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126. Cf. Texte, JJR, 60.

127. Voltaire, Art. (1766), 34-35.

128. Voltaire, LA, 45; cf. Lowell, EFR, 60.

129. Voltaire, Art. (1766), 38.





Highly probable it is, then, that Voltaire is thinking of Englishmen in general and perhaps of Locke in particular when he writes in a letter to Helvetius:

Nous ne sommes pas faits en France, pour arriver  
les premiers. Les vérités nous sont venues 130  
d'ailleurs; mais c'est beaucoup de les adapter.

For he goes on in the letter to speak of tolerance, a theme made urgently popular by Locke. So enthusiastic is Voltaire for Locke that he expresses the hope that Locke and his 131 followers might become the instructors of all mankind. Of Locke's tremendous influence on Voltaire there can be no doubt.

Nor in the minds of some does there seem to be any doubt about Locke's influence on Rousseau; though it seems clear that Rousseau is a unique mind, not content with empiricism or rationalism, but appealing also to feeling, being 132 romantic and sentimental in temperament. Nevertheless, he, 133 too, read Locke, and, for a while, he shared the sunlight cast by Locke over the fellowship of the Encyclopaedists. According to Höffding, Locke was "in so many respects..... 134 Rousseau's precursor" that "he can be called a disciple of .....Locke." 135 In a poem, Höffding notes, Rousseau, himself,

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130. Voltaire, Oeuvres, 579; suggested, in English, by Texte, JJR, 97.

131. Texte, JJR, 248.

132. Cf. Lowell, EFR, 275.

133. Texte, JJR, 111.

134. JJR, 95, cf. 144, 145, 147.

135. Cf. Fletcher, MEP, 14, JJR, 35.





had said: "Avec Locke je fais l'histoire des idées." As a student at Les Charmettes, he had also read the Locke-favoring Voltaire's Lettres sur les Anglais.<sup>136</sup>

As already has been suggested, Rousseau, though a follower of Locke, is best understood as unique in his nature and method. It is the judgment of Lowell and Lecky which is to be preferred to the intimations of Laski. In his dissatisfaction with rationalism, in his deep feeling for nature, Rousseau, though expounding doctrines reminiscent of Locke, nevertheless, gave them a new turn, and  
<sup>137</sup>  
"a new direction to the human mind." Though Lecky may contrast too sharply the thought of England and America as opposed to that of France, he is sound in suggesting that Rousseau best represents the contrast and exerted its  
<sup>138</sup>  
strongest influence. But just as there is the danger of underestimating the indebtedness of Rousseau to Locke, there is even graver danger of overstating it and of inaccurately reducing Rousseau to a mere copy of Locke. This is Laski's tendency when he affirms that "with Rousseau there is no contrast, for the simple reason that his teach-  
<sup>139</sup>  
ing is only a broadening of the channel dug by Locke." Yet Laski does recognize that Rousseau adds something to  
<sup>139</sup>  
Locke's thought.

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136. Höffding, JJR, 36; 35.

137. Lowell, EFR, 56.

138. Lecky, DL, I, 12.

139. Laski, PTE, 74; cf. 61.





These three, then, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau, together with other encyclopaedists, notably Diderot, the editor, d'Alembert, and Jancourt, publishing their writings in their journal from 1751 to 1771, and exerting almost un-<sup>140</sup>comparable influence, were, all of them, deeply dyed with<sup>141</sup> the colors of Locke. Höffding says that their

attempts may be described as the application of the philosophy of Locke and the new science to a criticism of the traditional Weltanschauungen and of existing institutions. From Locke they borrowed particularly the principle that all conceptions are derived from experience; of all dogmatic philosophical beliefs they demanded to know to what concrete experience they could be referred. And from Locke they obtained too, the idea of society as founded on a mutual contract assuring individuals happiness and freedom; all institutions whose workings went counter to this idea were rejected as the products of imperiousness and imposture.

With a different spirit, but not inconsistently, so far as Locke's view of the self in the Essay is concerned, the so-called selfish school, including Holbach and Helvetius,<sup>142</sup> also contributed to the dissemination of Locke's thought; and on the very eve of the Revolution, when such a rain of political pamphlets as the world had never seen before or since descended on the people of France, Locke's spirit, one may be sure, was in them. One of the outstanding pamphlets, written by Abbé Sieyès, was scarcely more than a populariza-<sup>143</sup>tion of Rousseau's Social Contract.

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140. Lecky, FR, 7.

141. Höffding, JJR, 49; cf. Lowell, EFR, 250, 259.

142. EFR, 322.

143. Lowell, EFR, 333, 338.





Locke lived, then, in the works of the French philosophers who read him directly; Locke lived also in the words and acts of the revolutionary political figures who read him directly or received him as interpreted by the philosophers. <sup>144</sup> Mirabeau knew and opposed Rousseau's Social Contract; <sup>145</sup> Vergniaud was influenced by Montesquieu and Rousseau; it is probable that Robespierre read Locke directly--certainly, he had known Rousseau, through reading his works and through personal contact. Meynier describes him as "le continuateur <sup>146</sup> et l'adaptateur de Rousseau." Faquet notes that the ideas that are in Rousseau "sont dans les discours et déclarations <sup>147</sup> des.....Robespierre....." Beraud suggests that the latter studied Rousseau under Jesuit teachers and that nothing pleased him more than his visit, in his youth, with the great <sup>148</sup> French writer. So, too, Saint-Just felt the impulse of Locke's thought, perhaps directly, more surely through the writings of Rousseau and especially his personal association <sup>149</sup> with Robespierre.

Locke lived in France not only through its philosophers and its political leaders, but also through the inspiration that came to them from the historic fact of the American

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144. Aulard, OR, 16.

145. Aulard, OR, 84-85.

146. Meynier, RR, 254; cf. Aulard, OR, 238.

147. Faquet, MRV, 289.

148. Beraud, TP, 61-62.

149. Faquet, MRV, 289.





Revolution and the Locke-permeated writings of Jefferson.<sup>150</sup>  
 That event gave impetus to their growing feeling for equality and liberty and their dislike for the monarchical state. As a consequence, too, "Voltaire, Rousseau, d'Alembert,<sup>151</sup> even Montesquieu, became more widely read than ever." The American Revolution gave them nothing new; it rather, drove<sup>152</sup> on old flame to a new heat.

It is almost needless to note, and it is not the purpose of these remarks to attempt to demonstrate, the fact that these followers of Locke differed in varied ways from<sup>153</sup> their master and from each other; it is essential to emphasize here only the fact that for all of them, in varying measure, and in some instances in great measure, Locke was a significant fountain-head of their thought and, through them, or directly, of the popular political ideas of the century which culminated in the French Revolution.

Locke was thus indirectly but vitally connected with the French Revolution. His fundamental theses of liberty and justice, through the writers, politicians, American

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150. Hazen, Art.(1895) 456.

151. Lowell, EFR, 332.

152. Tocqueville, SSF, 268.

153. This matter may be illuminated through a comparison of their works and through reference to such sources as the following: particularly Faquet, MRV, an excellent comparison of the three great French thinkers; Aulard, CFR, 3, 32; Lecky, FR, 7, 13; Lecky, DL, II, 238-240; Lowell, EFR, 42-43, 67, 292; Tocqueville, SSF, 255, 262-263, 267, 484-485.





influence, and popular reading, permeated French life and thought and contributed to the fire that broke out in 1789. In this sense, then, Locke's influence was inseparable from the influence of those minds whose principles he helped to shape. And the influence of those minds, especially those of the philosophers, was tremendous. Tocqueville maintains that

the writers of the time became a great political power, and ended by being the first power in the country..... The whole political education of a great people (was) formed by its literary men.... so that, when the time for action came, it transported into the arena of politics all the habits of literature. 154

Lecky asserts that the Encyclopaedia, edited by Diderot who was largely encouraged and assisted by Voltaire, "became the focus of an intellectual influence which has rarely been equalled," so that by 1771 "popular favour.....ran with an irresistible force in favour of the philosophers." 155 Their influence reached to all classes, nobility, middle class, and even the poor who could read and think. 156 So it was that, in conjunction with other historic causes, ideas, in good measure rooted in Locke (ideas of patriotism, loyalty, liberty, equality, humanity), 157 pervaded the masses of Frenchmen and, in fundamental ways, determined their course of

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154. SSF, 267; cf. 253; cf. Lowell, EFR, 302, 124, n.

155. Lecky, FR, 7.

156. Lowell, EFR, 322.

157. Lowell, EFR, 375-376.





action in the Revolution of 1789 and the years that followed. Locke's influence on the French Revolution was significant, indeed.

## 2. Locke's influence on the American Revolution.

Particularly in the discussion of Locke's economic theory, it was suggested that two types or levels of thought mark his exposition. The one was referred to as his principles, the other, as his application of them; the one appeared to have an enduring nature; the other, even if Locke did not see it clearly, carried the overtones of transitory things. One was characterized by his theory of consent, majority rule, the dignity of human souls, the well-being of all mankind; the other was summarized in the idea of unlimited private property. One was the aspirations of a great humanitarian, the other, the practical conviction that the capitalistic system was the only adequate means to those humanitarian ends of freedom, liberty, justice, and the sanctity of conscience. One contained the impulse of ethical idealism and ardent devotion to the well-being of humanity; the other contained the proprietarian conviction of the indispensability of the capitalistic economy.

Now it would be absurd to say that either the principles or their application did not influence thought and history in France and America. Positively or negatively, both aspects





of Locke's thought appear to have done that. Nevertheless, in the main, it does seem that Locke's humanitarian principles were dominant in his influence on France, while his specific application of the capitalistic economy found the largest place in American thought. Rousseau, even Montesquieu, had definitely socialistic tendencies; and many Americans feared just this leveling influence near the close of the eighteenth century. Thomas Paine, for one, and even Thomas Jefferson, showed definite marks of the Locke-Rousseau humanitarian tradition. And even though the framers of the Constitution seemed resolved, above all, on a kind of government which would foster their proprietary interests, they, too, were caught in the stream of influence with which Locke's humanitarian views had stamped democracy. And yet, despite the real presence of that humanitarian concern, the clear and consistent interest of the Constitution's framers appears to have been the protection of the privilege of possessing unlimited private property. One might even suggest this thesis, namely, that Locke's humanitarian impulse inspired the Revolution while his proprietary doctrines basically shaped the Constitution; though no doubt both impulses flowed through the hearts of Americans as they struggled for their new world.

Since this discussion is but incidental to the problem of this dissertation, secondary sources have been widely





used though original writings have also been examined. This again, then, is a suggestive rather than definitive exposition; it leaves open the door for further detailed investigation of great difficulty and great value. Nevertheless, certain opinions of the authorities, by way of suggestion, will be relied on and here set down.

Charles A. Beard, after extensive investigation of original sources, cites numerous data to support his thesis which appears quite convincing, namely, that the majority of those who were influential in framing the Constitution were vitally concerned with property ownership. Five-sixths of them were personally and directly interested in the outcome of the convention and benefited economically from the Constitution's adoption.

Not one member represented in his immediate personal economic interests the small farming or mechanical classes. 158

He mentions only isolated individuals, John Mercer and Luther Martin, who were violently in "opposition to the adoption of the Constitution because of its protection of property in-  
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terests." But in the main, these men sought to set up a  
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government which supported all types of property interests. The Constitution was formulated "under the pressure of eco-  
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nomic interests." So pronounced was the self-interest of these

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158. Beard, EIC, 149; cf. 73-151.

159. Beard, EIC, 131.

160. Beard, EIC, 100 ff.

161. Beard, EIC, 152-153.





groups of owners that, after the government was established, even Madison became disgusted when he saw how those who had pushed the Constitution openly went out after the financial gains it enabled them to make.<sup>162</sup> It is significant, too, that when the Constitution was ratified in Pennsylvania (possibly this is indicative of the conditions in other states, also), it was strongly supported by lawyers, doctors, ministers, and capitalists, but was opposed by a majority of the farmers.

Strong in the support of this kind of social order were the writers of The Federalist, Hamilton, Madison, and Jay. They were interested in democratic government; they believed sovereignty should rest in the people; they believed in a balance of power which prevented individual or oligarchical rule;<sup>164</sup> they believed in religious tolerance;<sup>165</sup> they believed in all these things, but, most of all, they appear to have believed in the protection of private ownership of unlimited property. Beard boldly insists that they wanted a government

so constructed as to break the force of majority rule and prevent invasions on the property rights of minorities. (They wanted) restrictions on the state legislatures which had been so vigorous in their attacks on capital. 166

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162. Beard, EIC, 125-126.

163. Hamilton or Madison, Fed; 256.

164. Madison, Fed., 195

165. Hamilton, Fed., 356

166. Beard, EIC, 154.







They sought, in government, "a foil against the attacks  
<sup>167</sup>  
 of levelling democracy." These men and this emphasis were  
 the representatives of that tradition which laid hold of  
 Locke's application and gave it first place while they  
 retained what they could of thoroughgoing democracy, too.

But there was another tradition, inspiring the revolution and carrying on through the early days of the founding of the Republic; this tradition, too, had roots in Locke, but especially in the humanitarian principles of Locke. And the rising tide of the French spirit, in the decade following 1880, gave this tradition a new inspiration; especially did it exert a leveling influence, repudiating the pomp and glory of public servants like George  
<sup>168</sup>  
 Washington and John Adams.

Representative of this tradition were Paine, (though  
<sup>169</sup>  
 Paine's Quaker influence was also great.), Jefferson and James Wilson. Paine's stirring articles were read before the American troops to rekindle their faith in their cause.  
<sup>170</sup>  
 He defended the right of revolution; he was the champion  
<sup>171</sup>  
 of natural rights; he believed that, as for government,  
<sup>172</sup>  
 "it is the living only that has any right to it"; that men

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167. Beard, EIC, 154.

168. Hazen, Art. (1895), 459; cf. 457, 459, 462.

169. Conway, Art. (1895), ix.

170. Brailsford, SCC, 63.

171. Paine, RM, 305; Fletcher, MEP, 251; cf. Adams, PIAR, 113.

172. RM, 281.





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must be governed by reason, not terror; he believed in the  
 174 social contract; he saw that freedom could not exist with  
 175 ignorance; he despised tyranny and glorified freedom. In  
 his now famous words, he says it:

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in the crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price on its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (not only to TAX) but 'to BIND us in ALL CASES WHATSOEVER,' and if being bound in that manner, is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. 176

Jefferson, like Paine, was moved particularly by that humanitarian impulse. He feared and opposed Hamilton and his associates thinking their stress on federal power opened the way to monarchy, that it would deprive the people of their freedom. In that basic conflict between order and freedom, he emphasized the latter; his opponents had an eye on the former. He was not a member of the convention that drafted the property-protecting Constitution or of the

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173. RM, 295.

174. RM, 307.

175. RM, 382.

176. Crisis, 3





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Virginia convention that ratified it. In his most famous words, his thought is best represented--and in that thought, clearly, he did not stand alone; in the monumental Declaration of Independence he had said:

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...

Another view of Jefferson's thought is caught in the words quoted from Jefferson by John Dewey: "A more beautiful or precious morsel of ethics I have never seen"--than that of Jesus of Nazareth!

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James Wilson, a revolutionary lawyer who had studied with John Dickinson, who had signed the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, was the representative of the new American legal institutions and philosophy as opposed to the English. In his interpretations, he followed in Locke's steps. Though he may well have shared the belief in the protection of private property, he had apparently no interest in curbing the free movement of the democratic spirit. "The sovereignty of the state was not a term in which he thought; the sovereignty of the people was all he understood."

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177. Beard, SCC, 126.

178. Dewey, TJ, 93.

179. Adams, PIAR, 134, 146.

180. Adams, PIAR, 142.





But it is not the purpose here to discuss at length the conflicting emphases of the founders of the government of the United States; it is more to the point simply to affirm that these men, with their varied views, represented two streams of Locke's thought and to note that almost all of them had been directly influenced by him--those who stressed his principles and those who preferred, above all, Locke's economic application of those principles.

Locke's influence on them was truly great, greater than  
<sup>181</sup>  
 Rousseau's. It, with the influence of the latter and Montesquieu, and Hobbes and Hume, "was the one green oasis  
<sup>182</sup>  
 in the arid desert of American intellectual attainment." Hamilton and, presumably, his associates, Madison and Jay,  
<sup>183</sup>  
 had read him. Wilson traced his "ideas of the nature of  
<sup>184</sup>  
 law back to Locke."

What a clear relationship between Jefferson and Locke, especially with regard to the two references made above. Jefferson, even in his own day, was twitted for borrowing his Declaration of Independence from Locke's Second Treatise  
<sup>185</sup>  
on Government. Even the language sounds like the language  
<sup>186</sup>  
 of Locke, especially the reference to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," the last phrase being reminiscent

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181. Adams, PIAR, 164.

182. Van Tyne, FAR, I, 343-344.

183. Van Tyne, FAR, I, 343-344; cf. Adams, PIAR, 169.

184. Adams, PIAR, 164, 172.

185. Lee, SC, 86, n. 1.

186. Cf. Laski, PTE, 70.





not only of Locke's theory of government but also of his analysis of man in the Essay. And his words about the ethics of Jesus might well have dropped from the lips of the British empiricist. According to Jefferson, Locke's writings were "nearly perfect."<sup>187</sup> According to numerous studies,<sup>188</sup> Jefferson was steeped in the philosophy of Locke.

Thomas Paine, too, seems to have felt Locke's strong influence; though one author cautions against over-emphasizing this, claiming that much of Paine is to be traced to his Quaker background.<sup>189</sup> Nevertheless, one can scarcely read Paine without feeling the spirit and hearing the voice of Locke. Consider, for example, the bits of Paine's thought cited above. As Adams suggests, surely, in a measure at least, Paine's "theories of politics are merely copied from Locke and Rousseau."<sup>190</sup>

What has been suggested of these men might also be said of others; enlightened men in America had, in general, read Locke. And the seed had fallen upon fertile soil.<sup>191</sup> In addition to those already mentioned, it had fallen on John Adams, Franklin, Josiah Quincy, Jonathan Mayhew, Robert Carter,<sup>192</sup> Samuel Adams, and John Dickinson. That Locke was

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187. Dewey, TJ, 15.

188. Van Tyne, FAR, II, 353; Egerton, AR, 125.

189. Conway, Art.(1895), ix.

190. Adams, PIAR, 110, 113; cf. Fletcher, MEP, 265, 108.

191. Van Tyne, FAR, I, 228-229, II, 354.

192. Van Tyne, I, 343-344; cf. II, 353-354, and Adams, PIAR, 108.





read even more widely than that is suggested by the fact that, in 1773, shortly before the Revolutionary War, Locke's Essay on Civil Government had been published in America in the city of Boston. Clear it is beyond doubt, then, that Locke's influence was tremendous, that, as Corwin says, "in justifying one Revolution," Locke "laid the ideological groundwork for another," though he might have said, for two.<sup>193</sup> And chief among the ideas which he helped to inspire and clarify for Americans were those of the natural rights of man, of sovereignty in the people, of a balance of power in government (though, in the distinctive place given to the Supreme Court, the Constitution far transcended Locke),<sup>194</sup> of the protection of unlimited private property, of liberty of opinion and religious tolerance, and of the distinct separation of church and state.

So it was that a British empiricist of the seventeenth century, arguing in his famous Essay for the necessary determination of men's wills and inspired by the Christian religion with a great humanitarian concern for all mankind and for man's dignity and freedom, in his social theory, mingling self-interest and altruism, unlimited private property protection and sovereignty in the people, transcended time and space and helped, in succeeding centuries, to shape the

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193. Corwin, Art. (1940), 95.

194. Cf. Beard, EIC, 161-162; SCC, 17, 119.





destinies of two great nations beside his own and to leave the marks of his pen on a whole Western civilization. Prophecy is dangerous; yet one can scarcely restrain the intuition that Locke's spirit is still living and is, in fundamental ways, destined to give direction even to the day that is dawning.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine John Locke's conception of freedom, as related to the self and to society.

In Chapter I, freedom is defined as having both a personal and a social meaning and democracy is defined as representative government in which sovereignty resides in the people whose elected representatives express the people's wills in the laws of the land. Locke's life is reviewed, the procedure for gathering data and the structure of the dissertation are set forth, and the literature of the study is surveyed.

In Chapter II, Locke's conception of the freedom of the self is examined. In a preliminary study of the problem of determinism (the theory that the total life of the self is explained by the principle of necessary causality) and freedomism (the general theory that the self is, in some manner and to an indefinite degree, independent of mechanistic causality, physical and mental, and free through a principle of its own nature) it is maintained that freedomism is the more adequate theory since (1) determinism lacks much that is required to demonstrate it as universally valid; (2) though relatively true, it depends on minds which transcend given atomic data to formulate a whole law; and (3) proof of it by a person, as proof of any claim, necessarily presupposes freedom as, otherwise, all conclusions would be merely

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effects of causes, neither true nor false; (4) freedomism is comprehensive in that, in addition, it is not only necessary to an adequate interpretation of morality, of human control of nature and society, of idealism and theistic religion, but admits and coherently includes the fact of determinism or, at least, of a high degree of uniformity and predictability in certain realms. As free spirit then, man is superior to nature, which may be necessitated; as spirit, he may freely surrender to reason or ignore it, do what he ought to do or what he desires to do, is morally responsible, is a person, not a process.

On subsequent examination, Locke's conception of freedom as the power to perform what one wills is held to be only incidental to the real problem of the freedom of the self. His theory that desire or uneasiness, naturally given, naturally determines volition is criticized as (1) minimizing man's rational and spiritual nature; (2) excluding freedom of thought and choice; (3) making ought and should meaningless; (4) destroying moral responsibility and grounds for praise and blame; (5) making God responsible for all men's acts including their evil ones; (6) destroying the distinction between good and evil; and (7) failing to see that ideas frequently determine desires.

His theory of deliberation, connected, as it is, with his hedonistic determinism, is first criticized as untenable because (1) if all volitions are necessitated, one cannot





be free to think since thought requires volition and (2) because in failing unequivocally to affirm the self's nature as spirit, Locke excludes the only theory which provides an adequate basis for man's partial independence of necessity. But even if one allowed that Locke's theory of deliberation provides real freedom for the self, his theory would still be criticized because (1) his relativistic theory of good and evil excludes man's escape from the necessity of pursuing his own happiness only; (2) it allows only mercenary morality and religion; (3) subordinates reason to desire; and (4) contradicts the clearly experienced facts of man's unneccessitated devotion to ideals and other persons.

In the concluding section of the chapter, Locke's view as a whole is considered. It is criticized, negatively, because (1) his incoherent hedonistic theory is inconsistent with his objective altruism; (2) his several basic conceptions of freedom are left unrelated; (3) he admits that the principle of necessity is not necessary knowledge; (4) his psychology of motivation is inadequate; (5) adequate grounds for moral judgments are destroyed; (6) as a consequence of a narrowly empiricistic interest in what men can know, his theory fails to consider sufficiently how and why men can know; (7) and his determinism leads to an infinite regress. Yet, however inconsistently, he also supports a theory of freedom in his assertion of (1) a real distinction between good and evil;





(2) an enlightened pursuit of happiness; (3) moral responsibility for avoidable ignorance and inadvertency, for thinking, and for choosing; and (4) five explicit freedomistic statements. In conclusion, the influence of Locke's view of the self's freedom is noted.

Chapter III begins with a preliminary synopsis of Locke's social thought, in the light of which the fundamental relation between his view of man and his theory of society is set forth. Locke's social theory, which combines self-interest and true altruism, transcends the Essay's hedonistic, deterministic view of man in that it supposes men to be not means to my happiness but ends in themselves and advocates an objectivity of thought and action which rises above mere self-interest. Not his philosophical analysis of man in the Essay, then, but his acceptance of the Christian faith, leads Locke to affirm, in his political writings, freedom of the will, a so-called law of nature or reason which is, more truly, the command of Christ to seek the preservation and well-being of all mankind, that a human soul is of greater worth than the whole world, and that loyalty to God and conscience takes precedence over obedience to the state. His social thought is further founded firmly upon religion since no atheists, because their oaths are thereby worthless, are to be tolerated by the state. Clearly, Locke's full conception of man and his social freedom





are, in good measure, rooted in religion.

Locke's theory of social contract is discounted as an interpretation of history in favor of theories of organicism, utility, and man's lack of reflectiveness; but as implying the ethical-political principles of consent, popular sovereignty, majority rule, and respect for personality, it is deemed basic in the defense of man's social freedom.

Locke's form of government--his means of securing the ends of government (the preservation of liberty, justice, the public good, private property), especially his balancing of powers between legislative and executive--is a sound safeguard of freedom, though it was more perfectly developed (with a more prominent place given to the judiciary) by the framers of the Constitution of the United States of America. Another sound emphasis of Locke affirms the authority of the laws rather than the prince's will.

His teaching that force is essential to government rule and that enslaved peoples may rightfully use it to throw off tyranny is clearly sound; but Locke fails to note that war may conceivably be removed from society only with the passing of rampant economic competition, the creation of a world political federation, and the dissolution of nationalistic armies.

Constructive though it was, Locke's view of tolerance is criticized because its intolerance of opinions contrary to government, of atheists, and of the intolerant, does, itself, exclude tolerance and undermines free expression and





free government. Locke is right in affirming that, under popular government, lawbreakers must be penalized even if they break the law for conscience' sake. But his theory is criticized because it fails to give sufficient consideration to the wills of minorities though it does rightfully presuppose possibilities of reason and moral discipline in man. The majority-minority problem can be solved only through intelligence and moral discipline which renders possible majority-minority co-operation, as well as rivalry, in the interest of all people. His view is at its best in its separation of church and state.

Contrary to Locke, it is held that even conditional slavery is untenable.

It is finally argued that Locke's theory of unlimited private ownership of property is not today compatible with the social freedom and well-being of man. This is held because the accumulation of vast wealth frequently means economic exploitation of the masses and their impoverishment, and leads to wars which take away both wealth and lives. In a necessarily organic world, a democratically planned and controlled economy together with a political federation of nations is indispensable to securing and safeguarding the best possible social freedom of men. It is pointed out, however, that the principles from which Locke derives his capitalism contain the germ of just such a society; some of these principles are: the earth was given by God





to all mankind in common; labor accounts for almost all the value of things; ownership of private property beyond capacity to use is justified only on the basis of common consent or majority rule and, by inference, can be denied on the same basis; the unalterable and supreme object of society is the public good.

To these may be added further conclusions, namely, that Locke, with his emphasis on individuals, failed (in contrast with Rousseau, for example) sufficiently to stress the organic aspect of political life and failed to affirm explicitly the modern idea that not only permanence but also development are characteristics of sound social organization. His social theory, nevertheless, as contrasted in method with those of the French theorists, had the advantage of rooting in the empirical data of actual political life and practical affairs in England and, whatever its inadequacies in detail or application, clarified for posterity certain fundamental and enduring political principles apart from which mankind's freedom can never be secure.

Locke's social theories had highly important and varied effects on the French and American revolutions.





## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

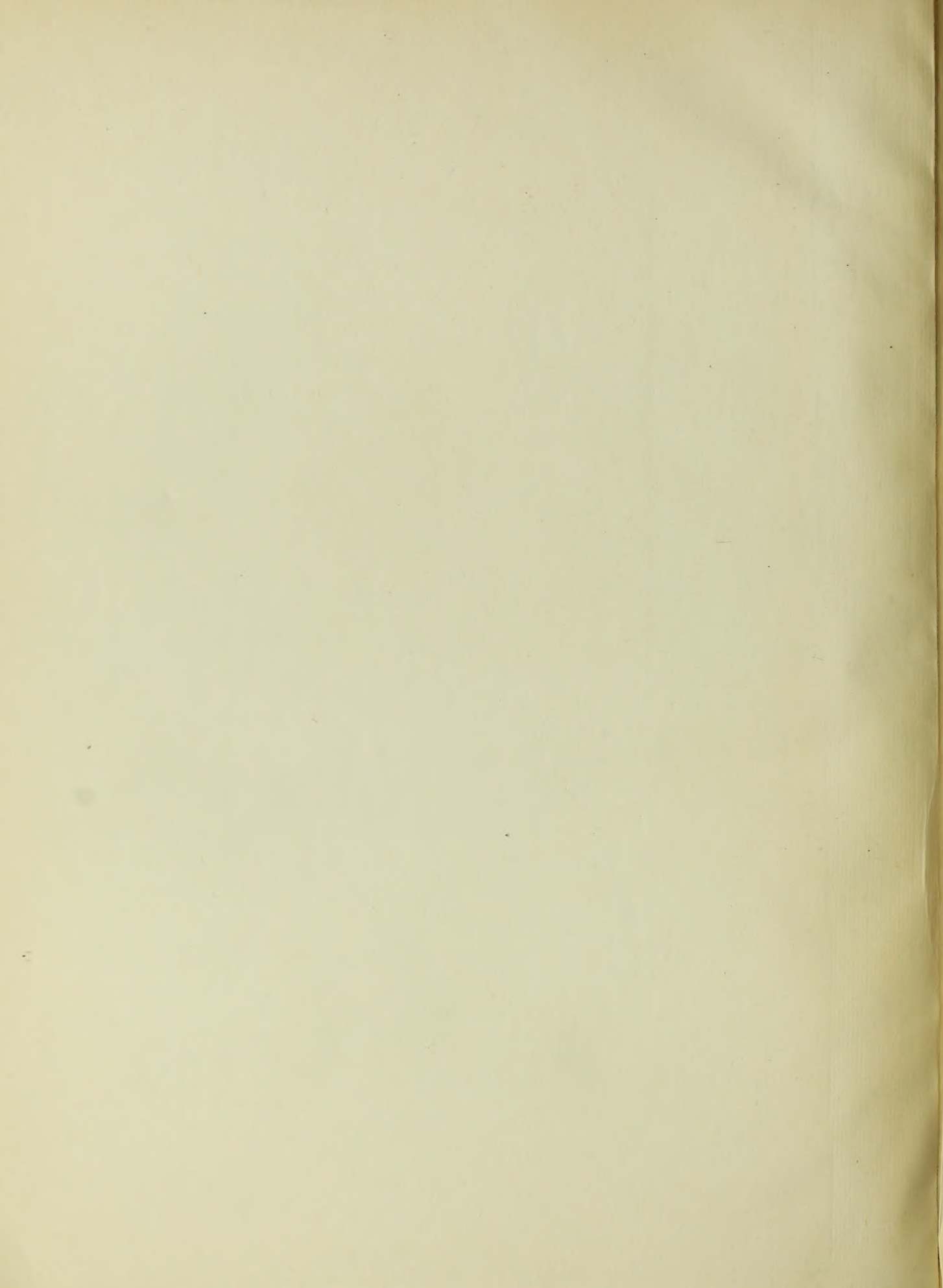


The writer of this dissertation was born in Lykens, Pennsylvania, April 25, 1913, the son of Susan Amelia and William H. H. Kerstetter. He was graduated from Girard College (the secondary school), Philadelphia, in June, 1930. Entering Dickinson College in 1932, he received his A.B. degree there in June, 1936. For three years thereafter, he studied at the Boston University School of Theology and was awarded the S.T.B. degree in June, 1939. He was elected Jacob Sleeper Fellow and a Fellow of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education. Since the fall of 1939, he has been enrolled in the Department of Philosophy of the Graduate School of Boston University where, in 1941-1942, he served as Borden Parker Bowne Fellow. In December, 1941, he was married to Leona Frances Bateman. He has held positions as minister or as director of religious education in several churches.











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